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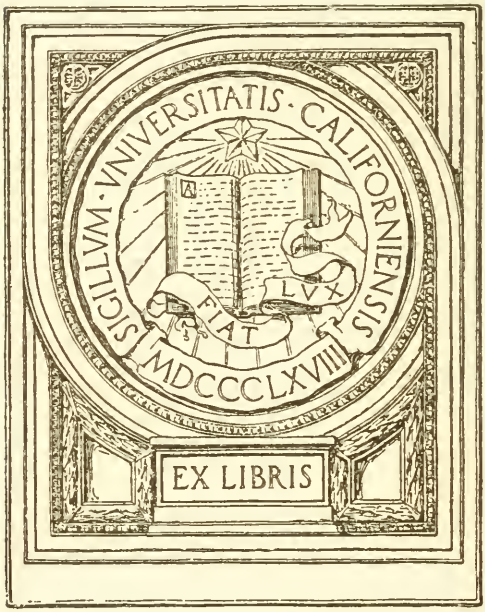

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

COLMAN FAMILY,

INCLUDING THEIR

CORRESPONDENCE WITH
THE MOST DISTINGUISHED PERSONAGES OF THEIR TIME.

By RICHARD BRINSLEY PEAKE.

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE.

LONDON:
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PREFACE.

I DO not feel justified in sending these Memoirs forth to the Public, without the acknowledgment that I have availed myself, in the early part of the Work, very considerably, of the materials furnished me by the Publisher.

And, as I could not pretend to write in a better style than George Colman the younger, "The Random Records," from his fertile pen, have been put in requisition to some extent. The remainder has been supplied by diligent research and the personal recollections of thirty-five years.

Many thanks are due for the Letters and Anecdotes which have been kindly forwarded by several excellent friends.

R. B. PEAKE.

February, 1841.

CONTENTS

OF VOL. I.

CHAPTER I.

1721—31.

Page

Account of Francis Colman, father of the elder George—Appointed British Resident at Vienna—Pulteney, Earl of Bath—Gay—Bubb Dodington—Lord Chesterfield—Return to England—Theatrical predilections—Ariadne in Naxos—Handel—Owen Mc Swiny—Italian Opera—William Hoare—Don Carlos—Duel between Pulteney and Lord Hervey 1

CHAPTER II.

1732—58.

Birth of George Colman the elder—Lord Essex—Death of Francis Colman—Westminster School in 1744—George Colman's first poem—The Countess of Bath's Letters—'The Connoisseur' first published—Colman and Bonnel Thornton—Cowper—Garrick—Robert Lloyd—Death of the Countess of Bath 28

CHAPTER III.

1759—63.

Colman on the Circuit—His Odes to 'Obscurity and Oblivion'—Churchill—Polly Honeycombe—Garrick and the Jealous Wife—Disagreement with Murphy—

Page

The St. James's Chronicle—The Musical Lady—Miss Sarah Ford—Lord Bath's Portrait—Terræ Filius—Mrs. Carter—Spa in 1763—Colman and Lord Bath—Mr. Booth's advice—Garrick and Quin—Garrick in Paris—D'Alembert—Marmontel—Clairon—'The Deuce is in Him'—Garrick at Naples and Rome—Gabrielli—Lord Spencer—Mrs. Cibber 56

CHAPTER IV.

1764.

Garrick at Rome—The Pope in a storm—Henry Baldwin, printer—Delane—Sterne—Colman in Paris—The Earl of Bath—Miss Ford—George Colman the younger—Edward Duke of York—Garrick at Venice—Death of Lord Bath—Lady Hervey—Lord Bath's reasons for accepting the Peerage—Sir Robert Walpole—The Duke of Argyle—General Pulteney—Deaths of the Duke of Devonshire, and Hogarth—Garrick in Paris—Death of Churchill—Wilkes—Doctors Brown and Franklin 99

CHAPTER V.

1765.

Sir H. W. Dashwood—The Sieur Monnet—Puffing in 1765—The Fribbleriad—Hardham's 37—Baron d'Holbach—De Belloy—Garrick's Puffs—Wilkes at Bologna—Death of Robert Lloyd—The Sick Monkey—Colman's Terence—Bonnell Thornton—Reverend R. Shepherd—Clandestine Marriage—George Colman the younger's evidence as to the authorship of the 'Clandestine Marriage' 133

CHAPTER VI.

1765—67.

Page

Reconciliation — Mr. Clutterbuck — Beefsteak Society— Dr. Louth—Christmas Carol—Rival Dancing-masters —Foote—Christopher Smart—Dr. Schomberg—George the younger—The meditated purchase of one-fourth of Covent Garden Theatre—Dr. Gem — Slingsby—Monsieur Favart—The English Merchant—Garrick mystified —Colman a Theatrical proprietor—General Pulteney— Bickerstaffe—Samuel Johnson—Whitehead—His prologue—Death of General Pulteney—His large property, and Will 174

CHAPTER VII.

1768—71.

Theatrical Disputes—Mrs. Lessingham—Lessinda—Mrs. Bellamy—Macklin—King Lear—The Royal Merchant —Kenrick—Voltaire—Dr. Johnson—Mrs. Williams— General Charles Lee — Gentleman Smith—Death of Powell—Joseph Reed—Charles Holland—Death of Holland—Foote—David Ross—Thomas Linley—Miss Linley — R. B. Sheridan —William Kenrick — Mrs. Clive—James Love 210

CHAPTER VIII.

1771—73.

Powell's Epitaph—Dispute with Prebendary, Dr. Elmer, and the Dean of Bristol—A fall from the Gallery —Proprietors of Covent Garden reconciled—Arthur Murphy — Mrs. Hartley — Smith — Ross — William O'Brien—Cross Purposes—King—Woodward—Salary

Page

Disputes—A Criticism of 1773 and 1840, compared—Oliver Goldsmith—She Stoops to Conquer—Quick—Foote's Puppet Show—Macklin's Parental feelings—John Macklin—Strange Duel—Correspondence, Smith and Colman—Covent Garden Theatrical Fund—Mr. Wroughton 257

CHAPTER IX.

1772—74.

Juvenile days of George Colman the younger—His Recollections of Goldsmith, Garrick, and Foote—Dr. Fountain — His Wife, and daughters — Marylebone Academy—Death of Colman's mother—Young George Colman at Richmond—Classical Residence—Westminster School, 1772—Gerard Andrewes—Bourne—Earls of Buckinghamshire and Somers—School-fellows—Colman nearly drowned—George Cranstoun—Sir W. W. Wynne—The Literary Club—R. B. Sheridan—Bow Street Magistrates—Man of Business—Woodward—Dr. Arne—Macklin's law suit 290

CHAPTER X.

1774—75.

Close of Colman's management at Covent Garden—His Industry—The Patents—Moody—Rich and Sir Thomas Skipwith—The Duke of Grafton and Lacy—Shuter—Hunting for a Patent—Garrick—Cumberland—Jephson—Mossop—Fitzpatrick—Bon Ton—Wilkes, Lord Mayor—The Lady Mayoress's Rout—Mansion House Lyrics — Garrick at Bath—Henderson — Sir Joshua Reynolds — Hannah More — Macklin's Trial—Lord Mansfield—The Duchess of Kingston—Trip to Oxford —Both the Colmans—Bonnell Thornton's Death-bed —Woodstock—The Peak 322

CHAPTER XI.

1775.

Page

Odd travelling party—Captain Phipps—Sir Joseph Banks —Omai, the Otaheitan—Visit to Scarborough—Novel mode of Sea-bathing—Up-gang—Mulgrave—Scotch tumble—Tumuli—Collectors of Coins—Otaheitan Cookery—Omai's Cuisine—Savage Sportsmanship—Mutual Instruction—Origin of the Hamiltonian System —Crazy Hall—Sir Charles Turner—The Father of Captain Cook—Cocken Hall—Lady Mary Carr—Joe Miller—Lord Darlington—Raby Castle 354

CHAPTER XII.

1775—76.

Return to Westminster School—Garrick again—Reverend Mr. Foster—Foote—Weston—Proposed sale of Garrick's share of Drury Lane Theatre—Doctor Johnson described—Contrasted with Gibbon—Epicœne—Mrs. Siddons—Bensley—The Spleen, or Islington Spa—Pecuniary misunderstanding between Colman and Garrick—Garrick's retirement from the stage, and farewell —Colman the younger's reminiscences of Garrick—Trial of the Duchess of Kingston—Foote's retirement —Negotiation for the purchase of the Haymarket Theatre—Colman becomes the proprietor 387

CONTENTS

OF VOL. II.

CHAPTER I.

1777—79.

Page

Colman's new Company at the Haymarket Theatre —John Palmer—Parsons—Charles Bannister—Miss Barsanti — Foote—Henderson—Edwin—Miss Farren —Colman's (the younger) Opinion of Henderson's Acting—Foote's *bon mot* and Jealousy—Digges—Blissett—Colman's Epilogue to the School for Scandal —Injunction—The little Theatre described—Female Chevalier—Suicide—Heads on fire—Horace Walpole —Sir W. W. Wynn—Wynnstay Theatricals—Both the Colmans, Actors—George the younger sent to Oxford—Matriculation at Christchurch—College Adventures—Early Accommodation Bills—Fellow Collegians—Lords Wellesley, Bathurst, Grenville, Colchester, Sir T. Tyrwhitt, Samuel Whitbread—Mad Poet Harding 1

CHAPTER II.

1780—81.

Miss Sophia Lee—Chapter of Accidents—Riots, 1780 — Manager in Distress—Miles Peter Andrews—Wilson —Baddeley — Miss Harper—John Bannister — The

Page

Genius of Nonsense—Doctor Graham—Visit to Wynnstay — Private Performances—Wynnstay Actors—Bunbury—New Pieces at the Haymarket—Margravine of Anspach—Beggars' Opera travestied—George the younger dispatched to Aberdeen—Sir Thomas Stepney — Jewell theTreasurer—Edinburgh Theatre—Fortune's Tavern—Jewell's Miscalculation—Sundries at Edinburgh 44

CHAPTER III.

1781—83.

Queen's Ferry—Perth—Brechin—Laurence Kirk—Inn, Library, and Album—Stonehaven—Aberdeen—Professor Roderick Macleod—University—King's College — Fellow Collegians—Inventory of Furniture—Charles Burney—Laird of Col—Isle of Muck—King's College Library—Lecture on Mathematics—Professor of Economy—Macleod Married—College Costume—Freedom of the City—Aberdeen Mohocks—Colman the younger's first Ballad—His first Poem and his first Farce—' The Female Dramatist' 74

CHAPTER IV.

Cacoëthes Scribendi—Leith Races—Pedestrian Expedition of George the younger, from Aberdeen to Edinburgh—Disguise—Adventures on the Road—Montrose—Press Gangs—Frith of Forth—Colman in a Collier—Panorama—Kirkaldy—Leith—Disagreeable Landlady—Colman himself again—Scotch Post-chaise —Return to King's College—Play-writing—The miseries and mishaps thereof—Fatal Curiosity—Prologue to Ditto, by the elder Colman, on revival at the Haymarket—Season at the Little Theatre—The Wartons . 101

CHAPTER V.

1783.

Page

George the Younger, solitary — Lyrical Lacquey — Sale of Furniture—Visits Montrose—Quaker Landlord —New Aberdeen—Haunted House—Ghost of a Carpenter—Revisits Edinburgh—George a Master Mason —Return to London—Decayed Wardrobe—Horace's Art of Poetry—Colman the elder's Translation—Malone—Dr. Vincent—Horace Walpole—Thomas and Joseph Warton—Dr. Shipley—Vernon Sadleir—Bishop Hinchliffe—Thomas Davies—Re-decoration of Drury Lane, Covent Garden, and Haymarket Theatres—Opening Address at the Haymarket—Election of Managers 131

CHAPTER VI.

1783—84.

Two to One—Introductory Prologue—Author's Feelings—Frank North—Haymarket Novelties—Shield, the Composer—Dr. Arnold—Visit to France—British Interpreter—Vestris—Beaumarchais—The Marriage of Figaro—Foreign Acting—Parisian Costume—Regiment de Blaisois—Return to England—Chambers : the Temple—Colman the younger married at Gretna Green—Dr. Johnson's Funeral—Turk and no Turk—I'll tell you what—Severe Illness of Colman the elder, at Margate—Dr. Harvey—Secret Despondency—Silver, the Apothecary—Return to London—The elder Colman's Disorder 163

CHAPTER VII.

1785—94.

Horace Walpole—William Cowper—Charles Bannister —Colman's Publications after his Illness—The Royalty Theatre—John Palmer—Mrs. Gibbs—Master Braham,

Page

and Signora Storace—Cumberland—Miss Farren—The Country Attorney—Inkle and Yarico—Jekyll—Ways and Means—Epilogue—Relapse of Colman—His Son manages the Theatre—Miles PeterAndrews—William Augustus Miles—Miss George—Dreadful Catastrophe at the Haymarket—Death of the elder Colman—List of his Dramas—John Bannister—New Drury—Holland, Architect—On the Size of Theatres 197

CHAPTER VIII.

1795—96.

Blue Beard, Feudal Times, and the Forty Thieves—O'Keefe—His First Introduction to Colman, 1777—His pleasant Comic Dramas—Colman in Dublin, 1779—The Iron Chest produced—The celebrated Preface by Colman the younger—Rehearsals of the Play—John Kemble—Dodd—Sir Edward Mortimer—Opium—Apology—Walking over the course—Severe animadversions—Caleb Williams—Godwin—Determination not to confound the two Colmans—Kiddy Davies—Caulfield's imitation—Lengthy letter of old Macklin to the elder Colman—A Curiosity 228

CHAPTER IX.

1796—1802.

Dr. Arnold—Haymarket Theatre, 1796—Elliston from Bath—Projected Entertainment in Lent—Suppressed by the Lord Chamberlain—My Night Gown and Slippers—S. J. Arnold—Munden—Mrs. Davenport—The Heir at Law—Supposed derivation of the character of Dr. Pangloss—The Italian Monk—Mrs. Abington—Blue Beard—O'Keefe—Blue Devils—Henry Johnston—False and True—Death of John Palmer—Feudal

Page

Times—Fortune's Frolic—Castle of Sorrento—Sighs—Red Cross Knights—The Poor Gentleman—Obi—The Point of Honour—What a Blunder—The Review—The Gipsy Prince—Michael Kelly—The Corsair—The Voice of Nature—Two Harveys—Novel Plan for opening the Haymarket—Independent Company . 271

CHAPTER X.

1802—8.

Letter to Dr. Arnold—Proposal to Mathews, the York Comedian—Engagement of Mathews at the Haymarket—Colman visits York—Tate Wilkinson—Superannuated Company—John Bull produced at Covent Garden Theatre—Haymarket opened with the New Scheme—Mathews—Elliston—Royal Commands—S. J. Arnold—Colman disposes of part of the Theatre—The Tailors—Serious Riot—Liston's first appearance—We Fly by Night—Bannister's Budget—His liberality to Colman—Young—Theodore Hook—Revival of the Critic—Mathews's Sir Fretful Plagiary—Leigh Hunt—Mrs. Inchbald—Anger of Colman—Correspondence 293

CHAPTER XI.

1808—15.

Haymarket Affairs—Plot and Counter-Plot—The Africans—Liston—Yes or No—Isaac Pocock—George Keate, F.S.A.—Effect of Fright—Tragi-comedy—Colman's Strict Sense of Honour in the Rules of the Bench—D. E. Morris—Liston in Octavian—Major Downs—Colman's *Jeu d'Esprit*—Mrs. Gibbs—Sowerby—Theatrical Disputes—Quadrupeds of Quedlinburgh—Darkness Visible—Travellers Benighted—Mathews—Colman at Carlton House—Chancery—Poetical Vagaries—Début of Terry—The Sleep-Walker—Look at Home—Accident to Mathews and Terry—Harlequin Hocus-Pocus—Love and Gout—Masquerade Prologue by Colman 324

CHAPTER XII.

1816—22.

Page

Haymarket 1816—Exit by Mistake—Tokely—The Actor of all Work—Teasing made Easy—The Green Man—Lord Erskine and Colman—Armata—Correspondence—On the Size of Theatres—On the Education of Actors—Royal Academy of Music at Paris—Miss O'Neil—Colman's Jokes—Pigeons and Crows—Colman re-visits Mulgrave Castle—Address to the Year 1819—X. Y. Z.—Colman appointed Lieutenant to the Yeomen of the Guard—John Taylor—Rev. Robert Lowth—Early Acquaintance renewed—Correspondence with Lowth—His rapid Illness and Death 355

CHAPTER XIII.

1822—36.

Extensive Alteration of Drury Lane Theatre—Samuel Beazley, the Architect—Opening Address by Colman—Colman appointed Examiner of Plays—Definition of the Term 'Burletta'—The Duke of Montrose—Sir William Knighton—Sheil's Alasco—Michael Kelly's Reminiscences—Humane Letter of George the Fourth—The Bishop of Chichester and aged O'Keefe—The Duke of York—Illness of Colman—Letters to Edmund Byng—Colman's Receipts—The Property Club—Theodore Hook—Arnold's Remarks on Colman—Kemble—Boaden—John Taylor—Woodfall—Colman's Last Moments—List of his Dramas . . . 394

MEMOIRS

OF

THE COLMAN FAMILY.

CHAPTER I.

1721–1731.

Account of Francis Colman, father of the Elder George—Appointed British Resident at Vienna—Pulteney, Earl of Bath—Gay—Bubb Dodington—Lord Chesterfield—Return to England—Theatrical Predilections—Ariadne in Naxos—Handel—Owen M'Swiny—Italian Opera—William Hoare—Don Carlos—Duel between Pulteney and Lord Hervey.

Of the early life of Francis Colman, father of George Colman the Elder, little can now be ascertained. In April 1721, he was appointed to be His Majesty's resident minister at the Court of Vienna, under the following circumstances. Robert Knight, who had been cashier to the South Sea Company, absconded to the Austrian Netherlands, and took refuge in Antwerp. Application was

made to the States of Brabant to cause him to be apprehended and sent prisoner to England. The States, however, insisting on their pretended privileges, refused to surrender him; and Colonel Churchill was sent as envoy to the Emperor at Vienna, requesting in the King's name that Knight, then in custody in the citadel of Antwerp, might be delivered over to his charge. In the morning of March 23, Colonel Churchill returned to England with the Emperor's answer, of which the purport was, that he readily condescended to grant the King's request in surrendering Knight, upon consulting the States, that no infringement of their immunities might ensue. The answer was deemed evasive. Mr. Colman was in consequence appointed to hasten the business, and kissed hands on Saturday, April 8th, on which day Mr. Pulteney, afterwards created Earl of Bath, wrote him the following letter:

" Chevening,*

" Saturday, five o'clock in the afternoon.

" Dear Sir,

" Mrs. Pulteney was afraid that her letter to Mrs. Gumley † was lost, not hearing from you sooner; but I told her that I supposed you must be in a great hurry, so

* Chevening, Earl Stanhope's seat, near Sevenoaks, Kent, built by Richard, second Lord Dacre, from a design by Inigo Jones. James, the first Earl Stanhope, died in February 1721; so that it is probable that Mr. Pulteney was occupying it temporarily, after Philip, the second Earl, had become possessed of the title and property.

† Mrs. Gumley was the mother of Mrs. Pulteney and Mrs. Francis Colman.

near the time of your departure; and that you could not be so regular a correspondent, as in a little time you would be obliged to be, with the Secretaries of State.

"I am glad to hear you will make Chevening your way to Dover; but you may depend upon it that we will force you to stay one night at least. Mr. Williams* shall be extremely welcome, and I shall be proud of beginning an acquaintance with him. Your coach will be filled with your own family: if you could persuade John Gay† to come on horseback with you, I shall be glad of it, because

* Afterwards Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, of whom Horace Walpole said, "he was in flower for an ode or two." Sir Charles, who in his best days was characterised as flighty, was the constant friend of Sir Robert Walpole, and ridiculed his triumphant opposers with electric effect; hence the friendship with Mr. Pulteney was of no very long duration. He is best known for his diplomacy, and was appointed British resident at the Court of Berlin. Lady Hervey, in a letter, dated March 4, 1758, writes, "Sir Charles is just come home, mad—literally mad as any man can be, who cannot be shut up as such. His family are in the utmost distress, not knowing what to do with him!" He died insane, and in confinement, in 1759.

† Gay in 1712 accepted the offer of residing with the Duchess of Monmouth as her secretary; which he subsequently resigned, being appointed to attend the Earl of Clarendon in the like character, on his embassy to the Court of Hanover. The Queen's death extinguished his hopes of advancement, and he commenced dramatist with "What d'ye call it?" a farce, which was well received, and introduced him to persons of the first distinction. His hopes of more substantial favours were again damped by the non-success of his "Three Hours after Marriage," and his being out of favour at Court. The Earl of Burlington, to divert his melancholy, in 1716 entertained him with a visit to Devonshire, his native county. In the following year Mr. Pulteney took him as a companion to Aix in France; and Gay requited their beneficence with humorous poetical accounts of each journey. This jaunting about, with some decent appointments, constituted the pleasures of his life, and never failed of provoking his muse.

the affair is over which was to have brought me to town, so that he cannot return with me.

"I will not tell you how well I wish you, till I take my leave of you; but you may depend upon it that no one is more desirous of serving you, or with greater sincerity than I am,

Your affectionate friend,
W. Pulteney.*"

Mr. Colman set out from London on Friday, April 15th. On the 18th of May he arrived at Vienna; and on the 23rd, accompanied by M. de Saphorin, the British envoy at the Imperial Court, went in the envoy's coach to have his audience of the Emperor at Lachsenberg, a country residence, where he was enjoying the pleasures of the season. Passing through a village while the Host was being carried in procession, the priest in an inconsiderate and mistaken zeal for the honour of his religion, excited the peasantry to insult M. de Saphorin's domestics, and caused both him and Colman to leave the coach, abusing and maltreating them to the jeopardy of their lives, notwithstanding they had taken their hats off, and behaved as instructed to do on such occasions.

The British envoy and resident complained to Count Zinzendorf, the Grand Chancellor, and insisted upon satisfaction proportionable to the affront, which might have been attended with fatal consequences, if the Imperial authorities had not interposed and prevented them.

* Mr. Francis Colman married the sister of Mrs. Pulteney, afterwards Countess of Bath.

The Court promised that all due satisfaction should be rendered them. The priest who carried the Host confessed that he had excited the peasants to compel the servants to alight from the coach, but solemnly declared that he did not intend to endanger their safety; and a letter from Vienna, on the 2nd July following, simply stated, "the priest had made suitable excuses, although the affair had created a great noise."

It would seem from a letter of George Bubb Dodington, afterwards Lord Melcombe, dated July 18, 1721, that Mrs. Colman did not accompany her husband, but followed in July. After a facetious mock recommendation of Mrs. Colman to her husband's official protection, written in the taste of those days, Dodington goes on to say—

"Your friends have diverted themselves mightily with your sending Lord Townshend's letter back to him; and, as I have always been one of those who have been as free to give you advice as you have been not to follow it, I must repeat to you what I have often told you,—that your wit will be your undoing; for though I must confess that it is very natural for any man in his senses to send back a Minister's letter, if he should be so unlucky as to be afflicted with it, yet the force of custom is such, that the utmost a man in a moderate situation can with prudence do under such a visitation, is not to read it; and, indeed, the presumption in so young a man of pretending to write as well as a first Minister,* may do you as much hurt at Court, as

* Charles Lord Viscount Townshend, declared Lord President of the Council, June 14, 1720; and Principal Secretary of State, in the place of Earl Stanhope, deceased, February 8, 1720–21.

the unaffected coolness and gravity, as to style and matter, would do you amongst your younger acquaintance; and though I suppose you think yourself secure that your conceits will not be comprehended, I submit it to your consideration, if such an accident should happen, what must be the consequence of it.

"To talk seriously, I am very sorry to tell you that I think affairs here in a very ill situation. I do not see much likelihood of the [South Sea] stock coming to anything considerable; you are no doubt acquainted with what has been done in Parliament relating to it.* Contracts are for a little while suspended, and upon what you owe the Company you must pay ten per cent.; so that I think the *quid valeant humeri* will be much more necessary to be applied to your pocket than to anything else, which I know is inexhaustible.

"You wrote to Mrs. Colman about buying several things: she was so kind as to send to talk with me about getting them. I thought, upon the first hearing, that they would amount to near four hundred pounds; and I must confess I did advise her not to undertake it, though I do not very well know your affairs; and the rather, because when you meet, and have settled together exactly what your fortune is, and how to be come at, if then you judge that it is an expense convenient or prudent for you to make, if you will send me your commissions, I will take care to have them well executed.

"As to politics, it is my opinion that this administration cannot stand; I think there must be a change of persons or of parties; I wish I may be a false prophet. There has been, and is, in town, a very strong report of the Tories coming in: a little time will now show what is in it. In case this accident should happen, I desire you would let me know whether staying where you are would not be better

* March 3, 1721.

for you than anything you can propose at home; because may be I may find friends enough amongst them to get you continued, at least I will endeavour it, but not without your orders. I hope nothing of this kind will happen: but as I have a sincere desire to serve, or to endeavour to serve you, it is right for me to know your opinion upon all events, how distant soever.

"All your friends give their service. Lord Stanhope,* Lord Lumley,† and myself, set out for Eastbury to-morrow.

I am,

With the most sincere affection and esteem, &c.

GEORGE DODINGTON."

It appears from the following letter from Mr. Gay, dated Bath, August 23, 1721, that Mrs. Colman had then joined her husband at Vienna.

"MY DEAR COLMAN,

"I hope you will believe me that nobody interests himself more in your welfare than I do. I was mighty sorry I had not the opportunity of seeing you before you left England; I wish you may find everything to your advantage, and everything agreeable. I own my not writing to you has the appearance of forgetfulness, but there is no acquaintance you have thinks and talks of you oftener. You see I endeavour to persuade you into the same opinion of me, that you must be convinced I have of you, because I have, on many occasions, singled you from the rest of my friends to confide in. I don't mention your happiness in

* Philip, second Earl Stanhope, succeeded his father, the first Earl, February 5, 1721; he died in 1786.

† Richard Lumley, second Earl of Scarborough, who succeeded his father, the first Earl, December 17, 1721; he died February 4, 1740.

love, I wish you happiness in every thing beside. I hope Mrs. Colman met with no difficulties in her journey, I am sure she will find none while she is with you.

" I live almost altogether with Lord Burlington, and pass my time very agreeably. I left Chiswick about three weeks ago, and have been ever since at the Bath, for the colical humour in my stomach that you have heard me often complain of. Here is very little company that I know. I expect a summons very suddenly to go with Lord Burlington into Yorkshire. You must think that I cannot be now and then without some thoughts that give me uneasiness, who have not the least prospect of ever being independent; my friends do a great deal for me, but I think I could do more for them.* Mr. Pulteney and Mrs. Pulteney had some thoughts of the Bath, but I fancy their journey is put off; I saw them at Chiswick just before I left it.

" You will hear before my letter can reach you of poor Lord Warwick's death; it has given me many a melancholy reflection; I loved him, and cannot help feeling concern whenever I think of him. Dear Colman, be as cheerful as you can, never sink under a disappointment; I give you the

* Gay's purse was an unerring barometer of his spirits; and, though talkativeness was far from being his foible, the continual dread of a servile dependence filled him full of complaints. In 1720 he published his poems, by subscription, with great success; but this was almost instantly damped by his being involved in the ruinous failure of the South Sea scheme. The younger Craggs had presented him with South Sea stock, which, by its rapid rise in value, placed independence within his grasp, and made him master of twenty thousand pounds. Dean Swift importuned him, while he had money, to purchase an annuity, lest old age should overtake him unprepared; but Gay, who seemed almost entranced with the illusory dream of dignity and splendour, could not think of diminishing, even in the smallest degree, his present means of greatness; the vision, however, only gleamed, the principal and profit were almost as instantaneously lost; and Gay, by want of foresight, seemed rather to invoke the chance of noble patronage than secure a competency, as the Dean had desired.

advice which I have always endeavoured to follow, though I hope you will have no occasion to practise it, for I heartily wish you may be always cheerful, and that you may always have very good reasons to be so.

"My service to Mrs. Colman. Direct to me at White's, if you will give me the pleasure of hearing from you.

I am, dear Colman, yours most sincerely,

J. Gay."

Mr. Colman, it appears, continued to reside for several years at Florence; for the following letter from Mr. Pulteney is dated London, September 21, 1727.

"Sir,

"I have the favour of yours of the 6th inst. N. S. advertising me of the bill of two hundred pounds which you had drawn on me for the damask. It is since come to hand, and I have given directions for the payment of it.

"In an assembly of ladies, at my house, a few nights ago, it was upon mature consideration determined, that red and green were the best and most lasting colours for furniture in London. The jonquille, which you said was made for the Cardinal Fleury, would not keep clean two years in this smoky town; therefore, if you please, the pattern of that may be made in red, but the yellow colour is by no means proper; in short, Mrs. Pulteney leaves the whole to you, desiring to have the damask very rich, and the pattern very large.

"Now I have given you this trouble, I must take a farther liberty, and you must not be angry with me if I chide you a little for your extravagance. What makes you throw away your money in presents? I am much concerned for your expense on my account, and I blame you for it on any other body's; believe me, Colman, there are few people worth valuing so much as to make oneself a farthing

the poorer for them.* For my part, I own that I am grown quite out of humour with the world; and, the more I grow acquainted with it, the less I like it. There is such a thing as cunning, there is falsehood, and there are views of self-interest that mix themselves in almost all the friendships that are contracted between man and man. These make friendships hardly worth cultivating anywhere; I am sure nowhere worth being at any considerable charge to preserve it. Do not mistake what I have said; I mean it not particularly to any one person, but in general; I am sure what I have said is true.

"I am sorry you have now so little hopes of returning to England to see your friends; perhaps Mr. Hedges' leaving Turin† will make it more difficult, for, until Mr. Finch‡ gets there, you will be the only minister the King will have in those parts. I should think Mr. Hedges, whom I take to

* Lord Bath's parsimony, in trifling matters, was sometimes laughable. The late George Colman related the following anecdote which he had from his father:—Across a lane, near his country-house, through which his lordship often passed in his carriage, a gate was placed, which was opened for travellers by a poor old woman. His lordship, one day, touched by her appearance, gave the word to halt; the out-riders echoed the order, the coachman pulled up, the cavalcade stood still; and William Pulteney, Earl of Bath, stretching forth his hand from his coach, bedizened with coronets and drawn by four horses, threw to the venerable object of his bounty, a halfpenny!——Lord Bath died worth twelve hundred thousand pounds—no wonder!

† John Hedges, Esq. was appointed his Majesty's envoy extraordinary to the King of Sardinia, February 19, 1726.

‡ William Finch, second son of Daniel Finch, second Earl of Nottingham and sixth Earl of Winchilsea; afterwards envoy to Sweden in 1724, and to the States General in 1726. He died December 25, 1766. Sir Charles Hanbury Williams has celebrated this family in song—

"The black funereal Finches;"

and

be a man of real worth and honour, and who has besides a great deal of good-nature, might be a proper person to recommend you to the Ministers, to get you an advanced character; I will wait on him as soon as he comes over, and try to engage him in it. This is the only way I can propose doing you any service for the present; when it is more in my power, you shall not want the assistance of those that have called themselves your friends, and have hitherto done you so little good. If I have moralized too much in the former part of my letter, I assure you it is this consideration has made me do so.

"Mrs. Colman is pretty well; but, by nursing herself up too much, she is so chilly that she can scarce stir abroad without catching cold. I wish your circumstances would allow your living together, because I believe a hot country would agree perfectly well with her. Mrs. Pulteney is much yours.

And I am, very sincerely,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

Wm. Pulteney."

The following letter is from the Earl of Chesterfield.

"Sir, London, Nov. 20, 1727.

"I received with a great deal of pleasure the favour of your letter, and have, as far as I was able, obeyed your commands in relation to the Marquis Riccardo; that is, I have been to wait upon him, and to offer him what services I could do him here, which are none at all, since, as you

and Horace Walpole says, that Lord Winchilsea was of so dark a complexion, and so slovenly in his dress, that he was called the Chimney-sweeper.

very well know, it is impossible to break through the inhospitality of this country enough to make any foreigner pass his time tolerably here. He has been ill of a fever almost ever since his arrival, and seems to have so indifferent an opinion both of our climate and our politeness, that I believe he will not stay very long.

" I am very sorry you could imagine that an absence of seven years, or even twice that time, could remove you from the thoughts of one who always thought of your friendship and acquaintance with the utmost satisfaction; and must take this opportunity of desiring in reality, what I shall soon be obliged to desire in form,—which is, the honour and pleasure of your correspondence. I hope, too, that our long acquaintance will justify me in desiring that it may be upon a more free footing than barely from His Majesty's minister at Florence to His Majesty's minister at the Hague.

" I shall set out for Holland in about six weeks,* to begin my apprenticeship to that trade, of which you are already master. I am sensible of the difficulties of it, and the little hopes I have of succeeding in it; but as the King,

* The Earl was not sworn of the Privy Council till Feb. 9, 1728, nor did he set out for Holland till April 23 following. During his embassy at the Hague, he lived in a most sumptuous style, and did infinite honour to the accredited munificence of England. On the King's birthday, Nov. 10, 1728, he entertained at dinner all the foreign ministers and persons of distinction of the States General, at three very large tables, placed in a great room which his excellency had built for that purpose, and the next day gave a grand ball and supper to four hundred persons. Two illuminated fountains of wine at the same time continued running for the populace, with music playing till three o'clock the following morning. His address in Holland, where he continued till the beginning of 1730, saved Hanover from the evils of a war, for which the King made him Lord Steward, and gave him the blue riband.

from having a better opinion of me than I deserve, has obliged me to undertake it, I must endeavour to go through it as well as I am able.

I am, with the greatest truth and regard,

Your most obedient humble servant,

CHESTERFIELD."

In 1728, Colman for a short time returned to England; and Dodington, who had received his appointment as a Lord of the Treasury on the day in which Colman had been appointed envoy to Tuscany, wrote him a letter, referring to his journey homeward.

"DEAR SIR, London, June 27, O. S. 1728.

"I hope this will be given to you at Paris by Mr. Walpole.* I think we have got you your arrears, of which I give you joy. You must own but one piece of Italian silk sent to me, and that is the green one, brocaded;—say I sent for one, and left the choice to you;—as also but one box of flowers, which you sent me for Mrs. Colman, to whom I have sent one and kept the other.

"I heartily wish you a good journey.

Dear Colman, entirely yours,

GEO. DODINGTON.†"

The next letter which we find addressed to Mr. Colman alluding to his projected return home, is

* Horatio Walpole, brother of Sir Robert Walpole, appointed ambassador to France, May 15, 1724, and plenipotentiary to the Congress of Soissons, in the room of John Hedges, Esq. April 1728.

† The climate of Italy disagreed with Mrs. Colman, and upon that account she returned home soon after her arrival at Florence, and continued to reside in England.

dated six months later than the last, by which it appears that his return to England was for some reason or other delayed, although he had evidently been staying some time in Paris.

"Dear Sir, Whitehall, Dec. 26, 1728.

"I received this day, with great pleasure, both your letters of the 29th and 30th instant, N. S. acquainting me that I shall soon have the honour of seeing you here. I shall take care to pay the bill of sixty pounds you have drawn upon me.

"I hope this will meet you at Dover. I have desired my friend Mr. Minet to deliver it to you so soon as he hears you are landed, and to do you all the service he can towards forwarding your journey hither. I rejoice to hear you enjoy your health better than when you left Florence.

"I waited upon Mr. Dodington this morning, who longs very much to see you. He is gone out of town, but will return on Saturday next: he desires that you will send word to his house in Pall Mall of your arrival in town, which I shall likewise be very glad to know.

I am, with the greatest truth and esteem,

Dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

Ja. Payzant."

Francis Colman appears to have had the same predilections for the theatre, as were so conspicuously displayed by his son, George Colman the Elder, and his grandson, the late George Colman the Younger. What his productions were as a dramatist there is no certain evidence beyond that of the opera of "Ariadne in Naxos," with which Senesino opened at Lincoln's Inn Fields' theatre, in January

1734. The other singers were, Montagna as bass, and Signoras Cuzzoni, Celeste Gismonda, Bertorali, and Sagatti. In 1730, Colman made the engagement with Senesino for his performances at the operas under Handel's management, for the season of 1730-31.

Handel's first letter to Colman is in the style of one who was in full terms of friendship with the person addressed; but no papers are known to be extant which afford any particulars of the British envoy's furtherance of the views of that eminent composer in any other operatic business than the engagement of Senesino, already noticed.

Handel's letters are given literally.

" Monsieur, Londres, 19–30 de Juin, 1730.

" Depuis que j'ay eu l'honneur de vous écrire, on a trouvé moyen d'engager de nouveau la Signora Merighi, et comme c'est une voix de contr'alto, il nous conviendroit présentement que la femme qu'on doit engager en Italie fut un soprano. J'écris aussi avec cet ordinaire à Mr. Swinny pour cet effet, en luy recommandant en même tems que la femme qu'il pourra vous proposer fasse le rolle d'homme aussi bien que celuy de femme. Il y a lieu de croire que vous n'avez pas encore pris d'engagement pour une femme contr'alto, mais en cas que cela soit fait, il faudroit s'y en tenir.

" Je prens la liberté de vous prier de nouveau qu'il ne soit pas fait mention dans les contracts du premier, second, ou troisieme rôlle, puisque cela nous gêne dans le choix du drama, et est d'ailleurs sujet à de grands inconveniens. Nous esperons aussi d'avoir par votre assistance un homme et une femme pour la saison prochaine, qui commence avec le mois d'Octobre de l'année courante, et finit

avec le mois de Juillet 1731, et nous attendons avec impatience d'en apprendre des nouvelles pour en informer la cour.

" Il ne me reste qu'à vous réiterer mes assurances de l'obligation particulière que je vous aurai de votre bonté envers moi à cet égard, qui ai l'honneur d'être avec affection respectueuse,

Monsieur, votre trés humble
et obéissant serviteur,
GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL."

A Monsieur Monsieur COLMAN, Envoyé
Extraord^are de S. M. Britannique,
auprès de S. A. R. le Duc de Toscane
à Florence.

On the 15th of July, Colman wrote to Swiny,* then at Bologna, in furtherance of Handel's solicitation, which the ex-manager thus answered :

" SIR, Bologna, July 18, 1730.

" I am favoured with yours of the 15th instant, and shall endeavour to observe punctually what you write about. I find that Senesino, or Carestini, are desired at one thousand two hundred guineas each, if they are to be had: I am sure that Carestini is engaged at Milan, and has been so for many months past; and I hear that Senesino is engaged for the ensuing carnival at Rome.

" If Senesino is at liberty, and will accept the offer, then the affair is adjusted, if Signora Barbara Pisani accepts the offer I made her, which I really believe she will.

" If we can neither get Senesino, nor Carestini, then Mr.

* Owen Mac Swiny, formerly a manager of Drury Lane Theatre, and afterwards of the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket, 1708. He quitted England for Italy in 1711, where he appears as an agent for the Italian Opera of London.

Handel desires to have a man soprano, and a woman contr' alto, and that the price for both must not exceed one thousand or eleven hundred guineas; and that the persons must set out for London at the latter end of August, or beginning of September, and that no engagement must be made with one without a certainty of getting the other.

" Several of the persons recommended to Mr. Handel, whose names he repeats in the letters I received from him this morning, are, I think, exceedingly indifferent, and I am persuaded would never do in England; and, I think, should never be pitched on, till nobody else can be had.

" I have heard a lad here of about nineteen years old, with a very good soprano voice, and of whom there are vast hopes, who, I am persuaded, would do very well in London, and much better than any of those mentioned in Mr. Handel's letter, who are not already engaged, in case you cannot get Senesino.

" I have spoken with him, and with the person under whose direction he is, and they both of them hearken with pleasure to a proposal of going for London, and they have promised me to accept of no offer till they have an answer from me, which I cannot give them till I hear from you, and that you approve of the person, which I suppose you will, in case you do not fix on some other person.

" I write this letter to you in great haste, being just on my departure for Rome, being obliged to wait on Lord Boyne* and Mr. Walpole in the tour which they are making: our stay there will not be above ten days, then we shall set out for Florence; but we design first to visit Leghorn, Pisa, and Lucca.

" I expect an answer from Signora Barbara Pisani by the next post, which will meet me at Rome: as soon as I receive it, I will let you know her resolutions, and then you

* Lord Viscount Boyne set out from England upon his travels, on April 15, 1728.

may provide a woman in her room in case she does not accept my offer; and on my arrival in Florence we will settle what is to be done about the young lad I mention, in case you do not find one that is better for our purpose in the mean time; I should be glad to know whether you got Senesino.

"Not having time to answer Mr. Handel's letter this day, I hope you will be so good as to let him know I shall endeavour to serve him to the utmost of my power, and I shall do nothing but what shall be concerted by you.

"I shall say no more at present, but conclude myself, with respects to Mrs. Colman."

The services of Senesino were not procurable for the sum named, and Colman delayed replying so promptly as Swiny required. The letter of the latter is yet extant.

"Sir, Rome, July 29, 1730.

"I was in hopes of the honour of a letter from you to let me know whether Senesino had accepted the offer of twelve hundred guineas. If he does not, then we must provide a soprano man, and a contr' alto woman, (though the Merighi stays) at a thousand guineas, or thereabouts, for both, with an absolute condition of their being in London by the end of September.

"I told you I had a young fellow in view, with a good voice and other requisites, in case Senesino, or some other fit person, could not be engaged. I have received no answer as yet from Signora Barbara Pisani, but hope to have one by the next week's ordinary: as soon as I receive it, I shall not fail to give you the purport of it.

"We set out from hence this day se'nnight, or Sunday the 6th of August, to make the best of our way for Florence, by Perugia and Cortona. My Lord Boyne and

Mr. Walpole make their best compliments to you and your lady.

I am, with respects to her,
Your obliged servant,
Owen Swiny."

" Monsieur, à Londres, 27 Oct.—6 Nov.

" Je viens de recevoir l'honneur de votre lettre du 22 du passé N. S. par laquelle je vois les raisons qui vous ont determiné d'engager Sieur Senesino sur le pied de quatorze cent ghinées, à quoi nous acquiescons, et je vous fais mes très humbles remerciments des peines que vous avez bien voulu prendre dans cette affaire. Le dit Sieur Senesino est arrivé ici il y a 12 jours, et je n'ai pas manqué sur la présentation de votre lettre de lui payer à compte de son salaire les cent ghinées que vous lui aviez promis. Pour ce qui est de la Signora Pisani nous ne l'avons pas eüe, et comme la saison est forte avancée, et qu'on commencera bientôt les operas, nous passerons cette année cy d'une autre femme d'Italie, ayant déjà disposé les operas pour la compagnie que nous avons présentement.

" Je vous suis pourtant très obligé d'avoir songé à la Signora Madalena Pieri en cas que nous eussions eu absolument besoin d'une autre femme qui acte en homme, mais nous contenterons des cinq personnages, ayant actuellement trouvé de quoi suppléer du reste.

" C'est à votre généreuse assistance que la cour et la noblesse devront en partie la satisfaction d'avoir présentement une compagnie à leur gré, en sorte qu'il ne me reste qu'à vous en marquer mes sentiments particuliers de gratitude et à vous assurer de l'attention très respectueuse avec laquelle j'ay l'honneur d'être,

Monsieur, votre très humble
Et très obéissant serviteur,
George Friderec Handel."

Senesino was engaged at the sum of fourteen hundred guineas, and in due time arrived in England. The Opera commenced on Tuesday, November 3rd, with Scipio, in which Senesino appeared : it was repeated four times ; the King and Queen were present at each performance.

William Hoare, father of the late Prince Hoare, and who upon the founding of the Royal Academy was selected to be one of the first members, was originally instructed as an artist by an Italian painter in London; but subsequently went to Italy, where he and Pompeo Battoni became the pupils of Imperiale. Sir Charles Hanbury Williams being at Genoa, on his way for England, gave Hoare the following letter of introduction to the British resident at Florence :

" Dear Sir, Genoa, November 23, 1730.

" I take this opportunity to thank you for yours, and for all favours received in Italy and elsewhere, and wish for nothing more than the opportunity of showing you what a real esteem and friendship I have for you, and how desirous I am of serving you anywhere.

" The gentleman that brings you this is the same I wrote to you about, being him that comes to study there; all favours you do him will be the same as done to myself; and I hope, therefore, you will oblige him in all you can. I shall take a further opportunity from England to beg pardon for this trouble, and to inquire after your and your lady's, and the young lady's* health ; to both I beg my compliments."

* Colman's first child, named Caroline, in compliment to the Queen of George the Second. She died young.

Hoare requited the civilities shown him by Mr. Colman by painting his portrait.*

To understand the allusions to Don Carlos in the following letter, and to the part which Colman, as the British resident at Florence, had in the affair, it should be stated that, according to the treaty of alliance between England, France, and Spain, concluded on and signed at Seville, November 9, 1729, N. S. it was among other things determined, that the succession of Don Carlos to the territories of Leghorn in Tuscany, Porto Ferrajo, Parma, and Placentia, was to be secured on the decease of the then reigning Dukes of Tuscany and Parma; garrisons of six thousand Spaniards were to be introduced into those places, and the contracting parties to maintain Don Carlos in undisturbed possession. The treaty was to be ratified, after regulations for the maintaining the Spanish garrisons had been settled by an agreement between the King of Spain and the said Dukes.

The Duke of Parma, who died January 7, 1731, in his will declared that the Duchess his consort was three months gone with child, and entreated the allied powers of Europe to have compassion on his people, and to defer the execution of their projects till the Duchess was delivered; that, in case of

* This portrait, at the sale of the late Mr. Colman's effects, produced only two guineas and a half. Another portrait of Francis Colman, by the celebrated Rosalba of Florence, in crayons, was purchased at the same sale, by a Mr. Harris, for three guineas and a half.

failure of a male heir, he willed that the Infant Don Carlos should succeed to his dominions and allodial estates; and, in case Don Carlos should die, his next brother should succeed, by virtue of the right the Queen of Spain their mother had to the succession; and appointed five regents.

No sooner was the decease of the Duke known, than a force of the Imperialists, consisting of two thousand infantry and five hundred cavalry, immediately entered the city of Parma, and seized the gates, the castle, and all the posts; but the German General Stampa at the time declared that they should pay for everything they required of the citizens, and should not intermeddle in the administration of civil affairs, but leave it entirely to the regents who were nominated in the late Duke's will: the people also affirmed on oath to acknowledge the young prince of whom the Duchess was then supposed to be pregnant. The Imperialists also proclaimed that they took possession of the Duchies of Parma and Placentia for the Infant Don Carlos; and that if the Duchess Dowager should not be delivered of a prince, the said Infant might take the investiture of the Emperor whenever he pleased, provided he came without an army. The Imperialists had a garrison of fifteen hundred men in the city of Placentia, or Piacenza.

"Dear Sir, Arlington Street, June 12, O. S. 1731.

"I have not written to you this long time, nor do I design to trouble you with many letters by the post. It is a very dangerous conveyance, and I should be unwilling to

do you any harm. I must disguise my sentiments extremely if I enter the least into the consideration of public affairs without abusing those fools, I mean our ministers, who have had the conducting them. Do not be frightened at what I have said, for this comes to you by a very safe hand. Sam Gumley* was with me about an hour ago, and told me he designed to set out for France to-morrow morning, and intended to make you a visit at Florence before he returned, and if I would send him a letter in half an hour's time, he said he would charge himself with delivering it safely into your own hands. I have not much to write to you, nor much time to write anything in; but I send you some other writings that will entertain you much better than I am able to do it. He will give you a set of the "Craftsman," which you must put, like the monks, into that part of your library which they call *l'Inferno*; and be sure, like them, to read these books more than any in the rest of the library: there are some other pamphlets which, as old as they are, will be new and entertaining to you.†

"I hear our fleet has orders to sail soon, and Sir Charles Wager is to conduct Don Carlos to Italy. Major-general Clayton is to have the command of two English battalions, which are to be put on board the fleet; and we have hopes

* Upon the death of George Berkeley, Esq. member for Hedon in the parliament of 1741, a new writ was ordered, November 18, 1746. Samuel Gumley, Esq. was returned, but unseated, being declared not duly elected.

† These pamphlets were probably one entitled "Sedition and Defamation displayed," written anonymously in defence of Sir Robert Walpole, in which Mr. Pulteney was severely handled. The real author was Sir William Young, Secretary at War; but Mr. Pulteney, who erroneously attributed it to John Lord Hervey, then Vice-Chamberlain of the Household, answered it in "A Proper Reply to a late scurrilous Libel, entitled 'Sedition and Defamation displayed,'" and was very severe on his

given us that five months after Don Carlos shall be well settled in Italy, Spain has promised to sign an act of approbation of the last Vienna treaty. Good God! what are we come to, that we must be courting folks, and begging they would give us leave to do them a piece of service! Would any one imagine that at the very time we are doing this job for them, we should not have interest enough with them to obtain a security for our rightful possessions? but, on the contrary, the works are still carrying on before Gibraltar, and the governor of it expects every hour to be besieged. An English fleet at Leghorn, and two English battalions in Italy, will very probably increase your expenses considerably; I am afraid those who should, will not think of increasing your salary in proportion.

"Mrs. Pulteney is too lazy to write herself to Mrs. Colman, but has desired me with my own to present her service to you both, and returns you many thanks for a fan she has received. We have bespoke you a piece of useful plate, which shall be sent to you by the first opportunity.

"I have not time to say anything more, for, to tell you the truth, a pamphlet came out a few days ago, supposed to be written by Sir Robert Walpole himself, wherein I am treated with great acrimony: it is necessary I should reply,

supposed antagonist. Lord Hervey, on January 25th, preceding the date of this letter, sent a challenge to Mr. Pulteney to meet him in the afternoon in the Green Park. Mr. Pulteney, attended by Sir John Rushout, his second, went at the time appointed, and met Lord Hervey, with Mr. Fox as his second. After four or five passes, Mr. Pulteney gave Lord Hervey two slight wounds, one in the arm, the other in the neck, upon which they closed in, but were parted by the seconds. Nothing of this murderous conflict is alluded to in the letter; but Colman was possibly aware of the facts, though not as to the cause of the quarrel.

and speedily too; so that, if I can, I must dip my pen in gall, after it has told you that I am, with the greatest truth and sincerity,

Most affectionately yours,
WILLIAM PULTENEY."

Sir Charles Wager sailed from Spithead on the 14th of July, with a squadron of nearly forty ships of war; he having been advanced to the rank of Admiral of the Blue only four days previously. He arrived at Cadiz on the first of August, and the combined fleets of England and Spain, with the Spanish forces on board, and some English regiments, arrived at Leghorn at the end of October.

The Imperialists had, however, early in September, taken possession of the Duchies in the name of Don Carlos; the Duchess Dowager having declared that she never had been pregnant, notwithstanding her previous assertions to the contrary.

Sir Charles Wager returned with the fleet to England, December 10; and King George the Second, in his speech at the opening of the parliament, January 13, 1732, congratulated himself on the success of his efforts to maintain the tranquillity of Europe, and that Parma and Placentia were in the possession of Don Carlos, and six thousand Spaniards admitted into Tuscany with the consent of the Great Duke.

Pulteney's pleasurable hopes in the next letter were verified in the birth of George Colman the Elder, early in the ensuing year; and those of the Duchess Dowager, if she ever had any, ended *in fumo.* In fact, much doubt was entertained at

the time; and the appointment to which Pulteney humorously alludes, arose from Colman's being officially instructed to obtain some evidence as to the probability of any issue. The young Duchess Dowager was examined by several ladies appointed on behalf of Don Carlos and the Great Duke, the other claimant to the succession; and these ladies gave their opinions erroneously, as it afterwards appeared, in favour of her pregnancy.

"Dear Colman, London, August 25, 1731.

"I have not troubled you with many letters, not caring to write to any one by the post, and especially not to those I may chance to prejudice by my correspondence. I have lately been at Tunbridge, not on my own or Mrs. Pulteney's account, but for the sake of my little girl*, who has been much afflicted with an ague, but is now by the waters perfectly recovered.

"We have had a most dreadful hot summer in England, I reckon you have been roasted at Florence; notwithstanding which, I should be glad to hear Mrs. Colman is in good health, and more likely to bring a boy soon into the world than the Duchess of Parma. By the bye, I am told that you, among others, are one appointed to peep into the lady's privities, and watch narrowly that no pretender be imposed upon the world. Perhaps you may not be displeased with the office; but, as your friend, I am best pleased to hear that His Majesty is likely to pay for your peeping, and that you have obtained an additional pay of three pounds a-day. I heartily rejoice at it, and I know, dear Colman, that you deserved this long ago; but, in the present treaty-making age, there is but one way for a Foreign minister to

* The Hon. Miss Pulteney, Mr. Pulteney's only daughter, died in her fourteenth year, in March 1742.

get into favour and become considerable, and that is by trying to make a treaty as well as the best of them. This I understand you have done, and upon the success of it give me leave to congratulate you and Father Ascanio*. The great Horace himself, I dare say, could not have done better than it will appear you have done; I wish you could have got an article inserted in this treaty whereby the Venus of Medicis, and half-a-dozen other of the best statues and curiosities of the gallery, should be given and yielded to us, by way of acknowledgment for the services done to Don Carlos; and the Great Duke's great diamond I think ought to be yours, to compensate your trouble as a midwife and a minister.

"Mrs. Pulteney has received a letter from the Duchess of Buckingham; it is filled with praises of you and Mrs. Colman, and gives a long account of all your civilities. Such a number of English as have lately passed through Florence must have been extremely expensive to you, but Don Carlos's future favour must make up all. I expect to hear of your being his chief favourite, for which reason I have sent you a silver tureen, if that be not nonsense, but it is as good sense as a silver ink-horn; in which I beg you would give Don Carlos the first olio he eats in Italy†. I cannot tell you by what ship it is to be sent, but you shall soon have notice and the bill of lading.

"Many of your friends desire their services, but I have not room or time to tell you their names. Mrs. Pulteney sends her compliments to you and Mrs. Colman."

* The treaty, on the happy completion of which Pulteney congratulates Colman and Father Ascanio, refers to that signed at Florence on the 15th of the preceding month—July,—between the Great Duke of Tuscany and the King of Spain; by which the Spanish troops were to be admitted into the Duchy, and the succession of Don Carlos agreed on, conformably to the treaty of Seville.

† Don Carlos, passing by land, *viâ* France, to Italy, arrived at Florence, March 9, 1732.

CHAPTER II.

1732–1758.

Birth of George Colman the Elder—Lord Essex—Death of Francis Colman — Westminster School in 1744 — George Colman's first poem—The Countess of Bath's Letters—"The Connoisseur" first published—Colman and Bonnel Thornton—Cowper—Garrick—Robert Lloyd—Death of the Countess of Bath.

George Colman the Elder was born at Florence early in 1732, and was baptized in the great church in that city, April 18th, in that year. Garrick, while travelling in Italy, in a letter addressed to George Colman*, says: "Before I left Florence, I had much conversation with an old servant of your father's, who lives with Sir Horace Mann; he remembers your being born, and shewed me the house where you first crawled and cried: I looked at it for ten minutes with pleasure. I need not tell you how well I am prepared to set you right, if you should hereafter make any mistakes about your age; and I fear that we already differ a year or two in the calculation."

* Dated December 24, 1763. Sir Horace Mann died at Florence, November 16, 1786.

That the Pulteneys knew of his birth early, is evident from the mention made of "young master" in the following letter. The Mrs. Tyndall named therein was a sort of *gouvernante* in the family.

"Dear Sir, London, June 1st, 1732.

"Though I wrote to you a few posts ago, yet I must trouble you with another letter. Mr. Sandys, a very particular friend of mine, has desired me to acquaint you that his brother-in-law, Mr. Archer, is coming to Florence, and he hopes you will show him all the civilities in your power. I assured him that my recommendation would be needless, for you were so polite, and so well-bred, that I was confident a gentleman of Mr. Archer's rank and distinction could not be a quarter of an hour in the town but Monsieur l'Envoy would be with him. However, lest any assiduity in paying your court to Don Carlos, should by accident make you less inquisitive about your countrymen, I take liberty to acquaint you that Mr. and Mrs. Archer will be with you soon; and as they are both of them acquaintances of mine and Mrs. Pulteney's, I hope you will be particularly civil to them, and do them all the honours you can.

"Young master, I suppose, thrives apace; and under Mrs. Tyndall's hand, to be sure, every thing grows as it should do.

"I hear that Lord Essex* sets out for the Court of Turin in about ten days, but probably he will stay some time at Paris. This day is to conclude a very tedious sessions of Parliament, and on Saturday the King begins his journey to Hanover, where he will not stay above two months. I hope our Court and that of Prussia are about to be reconciled, I am sure it is for their mutual interest to be on good terms with each other; and the delay of the match with the Princess of Mecklenburgh makes me

* William Capel, third Earl of Essex, appointed ambassador to the King of Sardinia, in which employ he continued till 1736.

conclude what I wish will be true, that a match will at least be made with our Princess.

"Lord Chesterfield is going to drink the Scarborough waters, which I am sorry to think he stands so much in need of. Perhaps a little quiet and regularity will set him up again, but at present he is in a bad way.

I wish you all happiness, &c.

Wm. Pulteney."

Lord Essex appears to have made no very long stay on his route to Sardinia; but on arriving at Turin, and having delivered his letters of credence, wrote the following to his neighbouring brother plenipo.

"My dear Colman, Turin, August 26, 1732.

"As the formal letter is now over, give me leave to write to you as from an old friend, who is sorry he is so near you and cannot come quite to Florence to make you a visit; I need not assure you, if you come this way, I shall be extremely glad to see you. I should be very much obliged to you if you would let your steward buy for me a good Parmisan cheese, and some Mortadellos, and send them to this place, and let me know how many dozen of Florence one of your chests holds, and if it is a good time of year to send me some white and red; the white I should be glad to have of the sweet sort. When I have your answer, I will send you word what quantity I would have, and you will let me know to whom my banker shall pay the money. I should be very glad to know what prices the marble tables made at Florence come to, and what are the common sizes you have of those with birds and flowers on them. I beg a thousand pardons, my dear Colman, for giving you all this trouble. Pray my compliments to Mrs. Colman, and am, in a great hurry, my dear sir,

Most faithfully yours,

Essex."

The declining health of Francis Colman induced him to try a change of air; and, in December 1732, we find him residing at Pisa, from whence the following affectionate letter to his wife, Mary Colman, was addressed. The diction exhibits bodily debility, which terminated fatally.

"My dearest Life,

"You know I am positively forbid writing till I find myself stronger in health, so that I will only trouble you with these few lines, to wish you, and the two dear little ones,* a continuation of all health and happiness, and to tell you that I hope I begin to gather a little strength, though the weather has been very cold ever since my arrival here: however, I have one of the warmest and pleasantest little bed-chambers that ever I saw, the sun coming in from fifteen in the morning till twenty-three hours at night; and in the next room I have a chimney. The wild fowl is so extraordinary good here, that I shall send you a taste of it next Thursday morning by the *Procaccio*, which arrives at Florence that night.

"I can add no more at present than that I am with the utmost affection,

My dearest dear, yours for ever,

F. Colman.

"My service to Mrs. Tyndall."

Colman lingered at Pisa till April, when death relieved him from further suffering. Mrs. Colman was then present: a letter, written in the third

* His children, Caroline and George. They had each of them "the honour of a royal godfather and godmother, as children of a British plenipotentiary," from whom they took their several names.

person, to Mrs. Tyndall, at Florence, but signed by Mrs. Colman, records the particular minute of his demise. The letter exhibits a mother's solicitude for her children amid the anxiety attendant on the death of her husband.

"MADAM, Pisa, April 20, 1733.

"Mrs. Colman being uncertain whether she shall return to Florence to-morrow, or no, desires that you will take all possible care of the child: and notwithstanding you will be obliged to attend the Consul, who will be with you to-morrow, yet she begs that you would at the same time leave the child in the safest hands, as likewise take care of everything committed to your charge, especially dear Pecce, and not leave her to cry, but to take her with you everywhere where you properly can; which at present concludes from, Yours,

MARY COLMAN."

P. S.—Mr. Colman departed this life this morning, at thirty-five minutes past seven o'clock."

The child here mentioned was George Colman, and "Pecce," his elder sister Caroline. On her return to England, Mrs. Colman was allowed, by favour of the King, to reside during her long widowhood in a house * which stood near Rosamond's Pond, in the south-west corner of St. James's Park.

The library of Francis Colman was sold to the celebrated Tom Osborne, the bookseller in Gray's

* Mrs. Colman appears to have resided here till her death, in May 1767. The house is marked like a capital I in the map of St. Margaret's Parish, in Strype's edition of Stowe's History of London, 1720, Vol. II. book IV. p. 67. It has been long since pulled down, and the pond was filled up in 1770.

Inn. In February 1738, he published "A Catalogue of a valuable Collection of Manuscripts and Books, being the Library of his Excellency, Francis Colman, Esq. Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to his Serene Highness, the Great Duke of Tuscany." It was, however, the first part only of his general catalogue, and on inspection there is nothing to indicate what books really were those of Colman; they were doubtless not many.

On the demise of Francis Colman, the care of his son George, since known as George Colman the Elder, was generously assumed by his aunt's husband, William Pulteney, afterwards Earl of Bath. By him he was sent to St. Peter's College, Westminster; and the letters of his lordship show naturally and pleasantly enough the varied style which accorded with the advancing gradations in the life of his *protégé*.

Cumberland, who was admitted into Westminster School in 1744, speaks of Dr. Nicolls as then head master; and Dr. Johnson, afterwards Bishop of Worcester, as second master. Vincent Bourne, subsequently known to the literary world for the elegance of his Latin verses, was usher of the fifth form; Pierson Lloyd, the father of Robert Lloyd the poet, and afterwards second master, was at the fourth. Cracherode, the munificent benefactor to the British Museum, was then in the head election, esteemed by all. At the head of the town boys was the Earl of Huntingdon; Warren Hastings, Colman, and Lloyd, were in the under school; and Hinchliffe,

Smith, and Vincent, then three boys in school together, afterwards succeeded to be severally head masters of that seminary, and not by the decease of any one of them,—a coincidence as singular in its results, as it is laudatory of the eminence and good government of the school at that time.

Colman's first poetical production, the verses to his cousin Lord Pulteney,* were written in 1747, while at Westminster.† The rhymes are rather of the Hudibrastic order:—

"VERSES TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD VISCOUNT PULTENEY.

"To you, my Lord, these lines I write,
Lest you forget poor Coley quite;
Who still is drudging in the college,
In slow pursuit of further knowledge:
With many a cruel lash his —— on,
To make him, some time hence, a parson,—
A judge, perhaps,—or a physician,
Strolling on Radcliffe's exhibition.
While you with foreign monarchs dine,
Or sup with princes 'cross the Rhine;
Idle your hours in lazy state,
Just as forgetful as you 're great;
Ramble to ev'ry court your rounds,
Draw when you please an hundred pounds;
Despise expense, and dress out tawdry
In clothes of lace, and gay embroid'ry;
Shine at the ball, and briskly dance,
As though you had been bred in France.

* Son to the Earl of Bath—he died on the 16th of January, 1763.

† They appeared originally in "The St. James's Magazine," a periodical conducted by Lloyd.

" I hear, too, that your constant trade is,
To ogle and ensnare the ladies,
Whose hearts, unwary, fire like tinder,
And waste away by love to cinder;
Whilst you are glad to see your pride
On all occasions gratified,
And disregard your friends at London,
Not caring if they 're hang'd or undone.
" ' But hold !' you cry, ' why this abuse ?
Pray hearken, sir, to my excuse;
Nor hurry with impetuous thought
To blame your friend, ere he 's in fault.
At th' Hague we had not time to rest us,
Disturbances did so molest us;
For, you must know, these scoundrel Dutch
Rebel for being tax'd too much.
Loyal and passive we obey on,
And bear all taxes they can lay on :
The British lion now is couchant,
Grumbling, perhaps, but won't make much on 't;
Taking, with patient resignation,
Whate'er 's imposed upon the nation.
In camp, too, I 'd but little leisure,
My time was so fill'd up with pleasure,
With all old school-fellows so dear,
And Albemarle and Ligonier,
That I had scarce an hour to spare.
The Duke, too, show'd me a review,
All that, at that time, he could do;
For you must know, at present writing,
Our armies have all done with fighting.
From hence to Hanover we went,
Lived in a round of merriment.
I had no time to scribble letters
To you, dear Coley, or your betters.'
" My Lord, you 're right, and we from hence
Will quite o'erlook your negligence.
But, sans offence, may I inquire
In what the present hours expire ?
What pleasure or what study best
Your temper suits may I request ?

I hear in law you're a proficient,
And other learning have sufficient:
Can solve a problem mathematic,
And read with ease a Greek dramatic:
You're skill'd in history enough;
Of algebra have *quantum suff.*;
And are, by learned men's tuition,
The quintessence of erudition;
So vers'd in all that can be named,
Isis and Cam are quite asham'd,
And all their scholars are downright sick,
To see themselves outdone at Leipsic.
Tho' I have long with study mental
Laboured at language Oriental,
Yet, in my soil, the Hebrew root
Has scarcely made one single shoot.
" I 've now broke up, but have a task, though,
Harder than your's with Mr. Mascow;
For mine 's as knotty as the devil,
Your law and master both are civil;
With milder means to learning lead,
By different roads, with different speed,
Douglas and you keep gently jogging,
But I must run the race with flogging.

GEORGE COLMAN."

Early in 1750, Colman, by attention to his studies, had, it appears, risen to the honorary distinction of being the second boy in the school, and was proceeding to be put in nomination in the election of King's scholars from Westminster to the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford. The Earl was, however, of opinion that the continuing a year longer would render him more capable of standing his election with greater certainty and éclat. This opinion was the subject of a letter from France,

where the Earl and his Countess were then residing:

"Dear Coley, Paris, Feb. 23, 1750, N. S.

"I am very unwilling to give any opinion as to what may be best for you to do, and therefore will refer it absolutely to Dr. Nicholls; for my own part, I am inclined to think one year more in Westminster College, if you study hard, and employ your time well, may be of great service to you; but if the Doctor thinks it any disadvantage to you to stay only as second boy, and that you are at present fit and proper to go to the University, let him tell me which you would go to, that I may use my interest to get you chosen in the manner you wish to be.

"I hope your promises are sincere; I am sure they are made on proper considerations; for, as you have little or nothing of your own to depend on*, you must rise in the world by your merit only, and such friends as are able and willing to assist you. Among these, you may always depend upon me, provided you deserve my friendship; and to encourage you to study hard, and improve yourself by all manner of ways, wherever you shall be, I will tell you that I look upon you almost like a second son, and will never suffer you to want anything whilst it is in my power to procure it for you.

"Lady Bath and I desire our services to the Doctor and Mrs. Nicholls, and hope to hear from him upon this subject; for, till I hear from him, I can determine nothing. It is

* It has been stated by the late George Colman the Younger, that his father on the death of his mother, the Countess's sister, as he had been told, had six thousand pounds bequeathed to him by her.

50296

not impossible but I may be in England before the election.

I am your friend and servant,

BATH."

"Our services to Mrs. Colman."

By the ensuing it seems, according to the routine of the school, Colman would have had to have stood the chance of the election, had not the Countess's timely arrival in London prevented it. The Earl, with no common pertinacity, appears to have been most anxious for the eminence and success of his half-adopted son. It was this letter which gave rise to the scandalous rumour that the Earl was in fact his father, by his wife's sister, Mary Colman, the wife of Francis Colman. The fallacy is apparent; the intercourse was impossible, from the length of time and great distance between the parties. The address to the following letter, was "Mr. Coleman, King's Scholar, at Westminster, in Dean's Yard, Angleterre, London."

"COLMAN, Paris, May 29, 1750, N. S.

"I have written to Dr. Nicholls* to let him know how well satisfied I am at your remaining one year longer at Westminster School. I perceive, notwithstanding my having declared strongly my opinion for your stay, that it was in some measure agreed you should leave the school this election; and that, if Lady Bath had not accidentally gone to England, you had been chosen this year to Cambridge,—

* Dr. Samuel Nicolls, Head Master of Westminster School, afterwards Rector of St. James's, Westminster, and of Northall in Hertfordshire; Prebendary of St. Paul's, Master of the Temple, and one of His Majesty's Chaplains. He died November 18, 1763.

a step that perhaps might have been of ill consequence to you for the rest of your life; but I hope now you will think of studying, as you ought, extremely hard this whole year, that you may make as good a figure as ever any boy did, at the next election, where I shall most certainly be, to judge how you have employed your time, and whether you mean to entitle yourself to my friendship and assistance, both which you shall most assuredly have, if you deserve them. Consider, therefore, as you ought, that you have little or no fortune of your own to depend on; that I am naturally inclined to have an affection for you, and, next to my own son, look upon you as one I ought to provide for in the best manner I am able: but, should you not merit my love, no other tie can lay me under the least obligation to take care of you. Reflect on this; be a good boy, and take care to continue me

Your friend and servant,

Bath."

The mother of George Colman, it would seem, lived not on the best terms with her sister the Countess, or the Earl; the reason is nowhere discoverable. On the Earl's return from Paris, he and his son, Lord Viscount Pulteney, went to the Hot Wells at Scarborough, and the Countess in their absence deigned to become the encourager of her nephew's attention to his studies.

The Countess's epistle runs as follows :—

"Dear Nephew, London, July 15, 1750.

"I thank you for your letter dated the 12th. The assurances you give me that you are, and will continue to be, assiduous in the business you are about, gives me great satisfaction. Your own good sense will inform you better than I am able to do, how necessary it is to lay in a good stock of learning (now is your time), and be assured the

brightest parts will make no figure in the great world without that which must be got by study and great application.

"I wish you health; you may rely on my friendship, and be assured I shall do every thing in my power to advance you. Lord Bath and Pulteney are at Scarborough.

"I have never seen your mother since I returned last to England.

I am most affectionately yours,

A. Bath."

At the election in 1751, Colman obtained the distinction of being at the head of the list of the Westminster scholars who were sent to Oxford; Lloyd* stood in the same position with those who went to Trinity College, Cambridge.

The precise time of Colman's being admitted a member of Christ Church, is ascertained by the following certificate of his matriculation.

Oxoniæ Junij 5°. *Anno Domini* 1751.

"Quo die comparuit coram me Georgius Colman Ox. Æd. X^ti Arm. fil. subscripsit Articulis Fidei et Religionis; et juramentum suscepit de agnoscendâ supremâ Regiæ Majestatis potestate; et de observandis Statutis, Privilegiis, et Consuetudinibus hujus Universitatis. St. Niblett, *V. C. Dep.*"

* Robert Lloyd, as his associates always designated him, was educated at Westminster School, where his father, Dr. Pierson Lloyd, was second master, and where, as Chalmers remarks, he had, unfortunately, for his associates, Churchill, Thornton, Colman, and some others, to whose example his erroneous life may be ascribed.

The earliest letter which the Earl addressed to his nephew, as student at Christ Church, Oxford, has reference to the payment of his quarterage, and, as usual, is admonitory.

"Dear Colman, London, February 29, 1752.

"I intended to have written to you by Mr. Douglas, but forgot it; however, my letter, by being franked, will put you to no expense, and it is to acquaint you that you may draw for your quarterage on Lady Bath, in the manner you mention in your letter to me. I recommend to you to stick close to your studies; you have parts equal to any scheme of life, but without daily labouring to improve them and to furnish yourself with knowledge, the best parts will be of little use. You know how well I intend by you, but then you must endeavour to deserve my kindness, and render yourself an object worthy of my care and attention."

While at Oxford, Colman commenced his essayic attempts by a Vision, printed as No. 90 of "The Adventurer," a periodical paper, conducted by Dr. Hawkesworth.* In December the same year, the Earl wrote to him, on the subject of his future conduct, and this letter shows that his nephew's predilection for the attractions of a Theatre was then a matter of disquiet with his Lordship.

"Dear Colman,

I hope you have employed the long time you have now been without interruption at Oxford, usefully, and as you ought to do. You must consider that you have nothing to depend upon, for your future maintenance, but your parts,

* The paper in which this "Vision" appeared, bears date Saturday, September 15, 1753.

and your industry; apply yourself, therefore, strictly to your studies, and improve those talents God Almighty has given you, in such a manner, as to enable you to make a figure in the station in which you shall be placed. You know that you have been for some time entered in the Society of Lincoln's Inn, where you shall, in about a year or more, come to reside, and study the law. Keep Mr. Murray, the Solicitor General,* always in your eye, and let him be the example you propose to follow, perhaps to exceed. I propose you shall take your Bachelor's degree at Oxford, then come to Lincoln's Inn, not to quit the College, till you are obliged to do it, but to continue taking your other degrees in the University. At present I would have you come to town for the Christmas holydays. You shall stay with me in my house, for about three weeks, but not to be at your mama's, where you may have opportunities of strolling idly about the town, wherever your inclination may lead you; not that you shall be unreasonably confined at home, but have liberty now and then to visit your favourite play-houses, as well as your friends and acquaintances. If it be necessary you should acquaint your tutor, or the sub-dean of the College, for leave to come to London, you may do it in my name, or shew them my letter. You may set out in three or four days.

Your humble servant,

BATH."

On his return to Oxford, after the relaxation allowed him in the last letter of the Earl, Colman engaged with Bonnell Thornton in conducting the periodical paper, entitled "The Connoisseur." It commenced January 30, 1754, and was continued weekly till September 30, 1756. When the inex-

* Afterwards Attorney-General, then Lord Mansfield, Chief Justice of the King's Bench, and created an Earl in 1776.

perience and youth of the writers are considered, the wit and humour, the spirit, the good sense, and shrewd observations on life and manners, which pervade these papers, will excite some degree of surprise. They indicate strong symptoms of the extraordinary talents which were subsequently to be more fully developed in "The Jealous Wife" and "The Clandestine Marriage."

Before the Christmas recess of 1753, it has been shown that it was the Earl's greatest solicitude that Colman should direct his studies towards a proficiency in the law. The next, is a reiteration of his desires on that head.

"Dear Colman, London, February 12th, 1754.

"Two or three days ago I had your letter, and am glad to hear you got well again to Oxford, where I hope you will return to your studies with double diligence, in consideration of the little interruption your London journey gave to them.

"I have got from Mr. Guidott, the law-bookseller, a list of such law-books as will be proper for the beginning of your studies; but as you are not to begin those till you have finished at the University, it is needless to purchase those books till you return to town, unless you can find some of them in booksellers' shops, of good editions, and to be sold cheap. Lay by the list, till you return to London.

I am your good Friend,

Bath."

"The Connoisseur" appears to have occupied Colman's leisure time during this year, and we hear no more respecting him till the Earl's letter in reply to his nephew's application to the Countess for a Christ-

mas holyday, evinces it was "a prodigious bold request" that was not granted; and the profession of the law, the attention to which by Colman is made imperative on the Earl's part in a preceding letter, is in the ensuing epistle said to have been his own choice.

"Dear Colman, London January 20th, 1755.

"About three weeks or a month ago, you wrote to Lady Bath, desiring to come to town for the Christmas holydays; to this letter I suppose she then sent you an answer, and I am now going to explain more fully to you both our meanings.

"Our intention is to give you such an education, as, with the parts you have, may enable you to get your own living, and hereafter make a figure in the world; but this must be done—and can be done no other way than by hard study and constant application. You must not think of trifling away any of your time in vain and idle amusements, such as those can afford who are born to estates. Your subsistence must be got by toil and drudgery in the profession you have chosen; but then, let me tell you, you will enjoy every shilling so got with much greater satisfaction. Let me place Mr. Murray, the present Attorney-General, before your eyes; look stedfastly towards him, and see what a rapid progress he hath made towards wealth and great reputation. You have as good parts, and are as able to pursue his steps, if you will exert the same diligence; all I can do, is to furnish the means, and give you such assistance as may be necessary by money and good advice. Think not, therefore, of losing an hour's time from your studies whilst you are at Oxford, but employ them in such occupations as may be proper for your future profession, I mean in a classical way, whilst you are at the University; such as reading often, and sometimes translating, parts of

Demosthenes' or Tully's Orations, and such like exercises; and when you have taken your Bachelor's degree, I promise to take you from the University, and place you in some chambers in Lincoln's Inn, of which society you have already been some time a member. When you are there, I tell you before hand, that I will have you closely watched, and be constantly informed how you employ your time. I must have no running to playhouses, or other places of public diversion, but your whole time must be given up to attend the courts of Westminster-hall during their sittings in a morning; and your evenings must be employed at home at your own chambers in assiduous application and study, till you have fitted yourself to make a figure at the bar.

"I left it to your own election what profession you would be of; you chose being a lawyer, and I approved your choice. The beginnings of all things are somewhat hard, and to shine in this profession requires vast application: think, therefore, of what I have said, and make a grateful return to me for the expenses I am at, and what I design further to do for you, and take this advice from

Your sincere friend and servant,

BATH."

Life is but an interchange of services rendered by one party to another, and tutors require pay as well as mechanics. The annual accounts, closed at Christmas, impelled Colman to apply for his quarterage and the sums due to his college, which, after some slight demur as to the cause of a particular claim, was conceded. The Countess's letter, dated from Bath House, Piccadilly, in March 1755, is almost a repetition of the Earl's injunctions; but, though it contains her Lord's general

principles of advice, it does not appear that they are improved by passing through the strainers of his Countess. We hear of cancelling obligations by the manner of conferring them, and, although her ladyship breathes regard, there is something in the air of her protection rather chilling to gratitude. The letter is printed literally, to give some idea of the mode of writing adopted by a fashionable female of the period.

" Dear Nep, Piccadilly, March.

" I rec^{d} your letter yesterday, and Lord Bath had one likewise from you sometime ago, He desires me to write the answer for us both & has told me in part what I shou^{d} say, It is this, That whilst you do well, and endeavour to improve yourself as you ought, that you may depend on having all proper and reasonable assistance from us.

" We shall think now, soon, of sending for you from Oxford, to place you in Lincoln's Inn, where my Lord has taken care to have you enter'd some time ago. there you must study hard, attend the Courts of Westminster, and that constantly, and soon render yourself able to get your own livelihood, besides our assistance.

" As for your Quarteridge It shall be ready when Ever you send for it, and likewise the four Guineas for your Bach-rs degree, and the sixteen, as you say is usual to give your Tutor, tho' neither My Lord nor Dor Newton remembers such a Custom, but Lord B—h apprehends it is y^{t} you have not paid your Tutor quart—ly ever since you have been in College, which he says you ought to have done out of your Allowance, and now the whole amounts to sixteen Guin-y at the rate of four a year. However it be the money shall be ready when you draw for it, and you may be sure of being deny'd nothing, whilst we think, and are persuaded you may deserve it.

" You to be sure will acquaint Lord Bath before you quit the univer-ty and take his Advice & directions in Every thing.

I am most
sincerely & affectionately
Yr friend &c
A Bath."

Now, had *George the Elder* condescended to become a punster, as his son, *George the Younger* decidedly was, he would, on beholding the signature of the Countess, A BATH, have exclaimed, " Yes: and a COLD one!"

Colman obtained his degree of Bachelor of Arts; and his withdrawal from the University, to shift for himself, and become a second Solon, was determined on by the Earl.

" DEAR COLMAN, London, March 27, 1755.

" As you have now taken your Bachelor's degree in the University, it may be time for you to come to London, to apply more particularly to that study, which is to become your profession, and your livelihood. I therefore recommend to you, when you are at Lincoln's Inn, where you have been enter'd for some years, and where I have now taken you Chambers, that you study hard in the evenings, and attend diligently the Courts of Westminster-hall in the mornings, constantly informing yourself, from friends and from books, of all the proper ways to signalize yourself in your profession. The chambers which I have taken for you, are small, but fitting enough for the present; they are up one pair of stairs, and I chose them so, rather than upon the ground floor, which is always damp. There are four small rooms, in which there are some presses and shelves for your books, which you will bring with you from Ox-

ford, and to which we will add such further law-books as may be necessary.

" At first, I suppose for a few days you must lie at your mother's, till we can get a bed, chairs, and such other things to furnish your chambers. When you grow a man of eminence in your profession, you may get into a better apartment, if you think fit, but that must be your own doing; I furnish you only with the means of rising, and recommend to you, never to stop in your career, till you have got to the head of the law.

" I tell you before hand, that I shall have you closely watched, that you do not idle away your time, in running to playhouses and such other diversions as I know you are fond of. Such amusements will not agree with your circumstances, who are by industry to get your own livelihood. Revolve what I have now said to you often in your mind, and resolve to do as I have directed you; you may then come to town as soon as you please, advertising your mother, whom I never see, of the day you propose to be with her.

" If there be any little matters to pay at the University, you may draw upon Lady Bath, or me, for the money. Should you have a mind to keep your name upon the College-books, till you have taken your Master's degree in the University, let me know what it will cost, though I do not see it can be of any great use to you.

" Send me word, likewise, what day you propose to be in town, because, upon further thoughts, I believe it will be more convenient for you to be with me, till we see you settled at Lincoln's Inn.

" Lady Bath will take care to get you a bed ready.

I am yours,

BATH."

The following letter, in Colman's autograph, and addressed to the Rev. John Duncombe,* exhibits him in his editorial capacity.

"Sir,

"I am very glad to hear from you again, as I was afraid our correspondence was dropped. I wish I could introduce your sonnet, but I fear it cannot be done with a good grace, as I have already treated of Ladies Poems: besides, I am willing to have as little poetry as possible in my papers.

"You know we are printing the first four volumes in twelves, it would therefore be no compliment to beg your acceptance of a set in their present form, as the twelves will have several additions and corrections. When these are finished, you must have a set—'the gift of the authors,' though I can assure you, they do not care how often you reduce them to the rank of mere editors. Without compliment, we look upon your contributions to the first volume, as a principal ornament to the work, and we hope that we shall not be less obliged to you, in the future progress of our papers.

I am, Sir, in the name of the Authors,

Your very obliged humble servant,

Town."

Colman was admitted into the Society of Lincoln's Inn, and was called to the bar, where he practised a very short time. At this period, his friend Lloyd addressed to him a pleasant poem on

* Rev. John Duncombe, M. A. The Duncombes, father and son, were amiable scholars, of a Hertfordshire family. The elder Duncombe, in his printed letters, mentions Dr. Cowper, the father of the poet, as one of his friends who possessed a talent for poetry.

the importance of his profession, and the seductions to which he was liable, on account of the muses. It was not probable, however, that a genius like Colman's could have remained devoted to the dry and irksome study of the law, and therefore when he seized an opportunity to renounce the bar, and attached himself to literary pursuits, more particularly the Drama, he did only that which his friends expected.

The anxiety of Lord Bath to inoculate Colman with an ambition for eminence in the legal profession, is strongly expressed in the following letter:—

"Dear Coley, Bath, October 11, 1755.

"I had some time ago your Lincoln's Inn letter, but without a syllable of news from Serle's,* or a word even of speculative politics from Chancery Lane. Must I from hence inform you what is doing in your own body? Why I can tell you, that Mr. Ord is to be made Chief Baron in Scotland, and some other promotions of a high nature, that at present shall be a secret.

"I can assure you that I shall be a little angry if you do not send me any pamphlet that comes out which bears the least character. If they are too bulky to put into one cover, split them, and send them in a couple, or three.

"I hope your increased revenue will now enable you to add a cotelet to your dinner, and a couple of oysters more to your supper, but I charge you to throw none of it away only in running after plays, which I know is your favourite diversion. Apply yourself diligently to your studies, and endeavour to rise in your profession faster than any body ever did before you. It has been said of Doctor Barrow, who was a great mathematician, that when head of Trinity

* Serle's Coffee House, in Carey Street.

College in Cambridge, speaking once of Sir Isaac Newton, then an under-graduate, he said, 'I have a young man under me who knows more of mathematics than I do, or than anybody else does!' Now I would have my Lord Chancellor say the same thing of you, when he is sitting in Lincoln's Inn Hall, that he has a young man, in the very same quadrangle where he is sitting, who is a rising genius, who will soon outstrip them all, and become a second Bacon. Lady Bath sends you her service.

I am yours,

BATH."

In 1757, though bearing traits of having been written two years earlier, Colman depicted his own situation in a poem, which he entitled "The Law Student."* It commences—

"Now Christ Church left, and fix'd at Lincoln's Inn,
The important studies of the law begin—
There are, whose love of poesy has smit,
Who blind to interest, arrant dupes to wit,
Have wander'd devious in the pleasing road,
With attic flow'rs and classic wreaths bestrew'd:
Wedded to verse, embrac'd the muse for life,
And ta'en, like modern bucks, their wh—— to wife!"

From this poem we learn that the Countess of Bath was favourably inclined to Colman's "turning Parson," but the Earl would have him stick close to the bar, from which, notwithstanding the apparent severity of study, he found leisure to attend his favourite diversion in running after plays, and even to uphold an acquaintance with some of the most distinguished dramatists of the day.

* Printed in Colman's Prose and Verse on several occasions.

Among his associates, Colman had as arrant a wanderer as himself from the thorny road of jurisprudence into the primrose paths of literature and poetry, in the person of William Cowper, since so justly estimated as a poet of high rank. He had left Westminster in 1749, for a three years' noviciate in the law, in the office of an attorney named Chapman, and in 1752 settled in Chambers in the Inner Temple. The soul of Cowper was so refined and etherial, that it could not be expected to shine in the gross atmosphere of worldly contention; but during his residence in the Temple he appears to have been personally acquainted with the most eminent writers of the time, more particularly with his school fellows, Colman, Bonnel Thornton, and Lloyd. Cowper's pen was ready to second the charitable wishes of his heart, and his compositions were devoted to the service of any friend who requested it: it will not, therefore, excite surprise that Cowper was a contributor to "The Connoisseur." Several papers are ascribed to him, but only three were written by him, viz.—Nos. 119, 134, and 138; the first dated in May, and the last September 1756, of which he contented himself with the claim of authorship.

Colman's introduction to Garrick appears to have been occasioned by some well-turned complimentary remarks on the performance or management of the latter; Garrick's reply to this commendation is here inserted:

"Sir, Wednesday.

"I am extremely obliged to you for your particular and

genteel compliment to me,* and more so as I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance. I must assure you that I have more pleasure than uneasiness, when I read a true well-intended criticism, though against myself; for I always flatter myself that I can attain the mark which my friends may point out to me, and I really think myself neither too old nor too wise to learn. If you would still add to the favour conferred upon me, I should wish to have the pleasure of seeing you in Southampton Street, or rather I will do myself the pleasure of waiting upon you, when I return from the country, if you will signify to me by a line that it will not be inconvenient or disagreeable to you.

I am, Sir,

Your most obliged servant,

D. Garrick."

"P. S.—I shall return from Hampton the beginning of next week. A line directed to me there (Hampton in Middlesex), will be with me the next day.

To George Colman, Esq., Serle's
Coffee House, Lincoln's Inn."

* This alludes to a pamphlet, written by Colman, entitled "Critical Reflections on the Old English Dramatic Writers, addressed to David Garrick, Esq.," which was afterwards prefixed to Coxeter's edition of Massinger's works. The advice, indeed, which is given in it to Garrick, refers more to his management than to his acting. The foregoing note was the opinion of George Colman, the younger. Another version has however been suggested, which is annexed :—

The 'particular and genteel compliment,' was couched in "A Letter of Abuse to David Garrick, Esq.," 1757-8, of which Colman was the anonymous author. In this production, wherein he professed himself to be the avenger of the numberless instances of most illustrious names in every branch of knowledge, who have suffered by a literary ostracism, and determined, like Damian, to stab this little tyrant of the theatre, in asserting the wrongs of Theophilus Cibber and Macklin, he covertly pays Garrick the highest compliment; and by rendering his opponents

So early as February 1758, we find Murphy advancing the opinions of Colman and Fitzpatrick, in approval of his farce of "The Upholsterer," to induce its early performance at Drury-lane.*

The degree of Master of Arts was conferred on Colman, March 18, 1758, and the fees, amounting to twenty guineas, were paid by the Earl of Bath. He soon after appears to have practised as a barrister, and to have gone the circuit. Whether the novelty of his calling, or his assiduity, were the causes of his not writing to the Earl, is not in evidence; the latter, however, soon took occasion to remind him of his negligence, and also of the twenty guineas expended for the degree.

His lordship writes with some humour.

"Dear Coley, Tunbridge Wells, July 29, 1758.

"I suppose you had such a vast deal of business on the circuit, and got so much money on it, that you had no time to lose in writing letters. We have had but two from you since you left us, and those extremely short; one of them as short as yourself, and the other, as a Shrewsbury cake. You must know that I expected a circumstantial and historical relation of every thing that happened on the circuit; how many causes you carried by dint of learning and ingenuity, to the surprise of the two stupid sages of the law, and to the astonishment of all the heavy stagers of the circuit. I should have been glad to hear likewise, of all the misfortunes which happened to you on the road,

ridiculous, exposed them to the public as undeserving of attention. Macklin is characterised as Shylock, Cibber as Bronze, and Paul Hefferman, author of "The Tuner," a dramatic periodical paper, Dr. Liffey, a physician, author, and critic.

* See the Garrick Correspondence.

how many shirts and other things your aukward footboy lost you, in your journey, and how much leather you lost by your lame hackney horse.

" Mr. Douglas is losing his money here at lottery tickets, but, perhaps, he may get a rich wife by it at last. He has won many an old woman's heart here, by an excellent sermon he preached, but I want to have him, by his gallantry, get a young one, with ten thousand pounds.

" Lord Pulteney came to us yesterday, and stays about a week, soon after which, we are in expectation of you, to lavish away some of that money, you got so plentifully, and with so much ease in your legal peregrination. The first thing an honest man has to do, is to pay his just debts, and consequently I shall have my twenty guineas refunded, with what interest you think fit. I hear you often dined with the sheriff and with the judges, but you will eat more luxuriously with us, for we have venison and whit-ears at every meal. Lady Bath will be glad to see you, and so you may be sure shall I,

Your most affectionate friend,

BATH.

" We have had very bad weather, and abundance of rain ; I hope it has not been general, for the sake of the corn."

Anne, Countess of Bath, the sister of Colman's mother, died in September following, at Bath House, Piccadilly, and was buried in the family vault in Westminster Abbey.*

* Horace Walpole, in a letter to Sir Horace Mann, of the 24th of August 1758, says, " My Lady Bath has had a paralytic stroke, which drew her mouth aside and took away her speech. I never heard a greater instance of cool sense ; she made signs for a pen and ink, and wrote *Palsy*. They got immediate assistance, and she is recovered."

CHAPTER III.

1759—1763.

Colman on the Circuit—His Odes to 'Obscurity and Oblivion'—Churchill—Polly Honeycombe—Garrick and "The Jealous Wife"—Disagreement with Murphy—"The St. James's Chronicle"—"The Musical Lady"—Miss Sarah Ford—Lord Bath's Portrait—"Terræ Filius"—Mrs. Carter—Spa in 1763—Colman and Lord Bath—Mr. Booth—Garrick and Quin—Garrick in Paris—D'Alembert—Marmontel—Clairon—"The Deuce is in Him"—Garrick at Naples and Rome—Gabrielli—Lord Spencer—Mrs. Cibber.

Colman, as Murphy's particular friend, was the mediator with Garrick relative to the unfortunate play, called "The Orphan of China," which was for some years a contested matter between them. After the piece had undergone Murphy's last revision, it was placed in Colman's hands, who submitted it to Garrick for his final determination. Colman's predilection was evidently in its favour, hence the difference of judgment alluded to in the ensuing letter.

"Dear Sir, Hampton, Thursday.

"I am obliged to be from Hampton for a few days; at my return, I will most carefully consider what you have put

into my hands. I must beg leave to read it more than once, before I send you my opinion, which shall at least be a sincere one, and given with all the care that my regard for the author will always require from me.

" I have indeed been very unfortunate in my literary attachments, but I flatter myself, both from the little acquaintance I have with Mr. Colman, and from the knowledge of my own heart, that he will have nothing to urge against my sincerity, however we may differ in our judgments.

" You may depend upon my secresy in this affair, and may expect to receive a letter from me, directed as you desire, in about a week or ten days.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and sincere humble servant,

D. Garrick.

" I am very sorry that I could not have the pleasure of your company next week, with Dr. Markham and Mr. Bedenfield."

In 1759, Colman was still busied in his vocation. The Earl of Bath, in a letter addressed " To Mr. Colman upon the Oxford Circuit, at Shrewsbury, Shropshire," alludes to his having been employed as the advocate of two men, whom his tact had rescued from the extreme penalty of the law. A tincture of pleasant sarcasm embues most of the Earl's epistles, and there is admonition in all.

" Dear Coley, London, March 23, 1759.

" I thank you for your letter, and am glad to hear of your notable success at Oxford. You say you got two guineas by saving two men from hanging: I wish you was to have two guineas a piece for every man in Oxford that

deserves to be hanged, and then the University would be of some use to you. At Worcester, I doubt you will get but little; but get acquainted with two or three roguish attorneys, and they will lay you in a stock of causes for next assizes, when you are to be no longer at my expense.

"Mrs. Lake,* Miss Seare, Lord Pulteney, and Mr. Douglas drank your health on Sunday last, and wished to convey you a few bottles of the claret we drank it in.

"This letter I direct to Shrewsbury, which is the surest place to find you in. If you are concerned in the trial of any rape, the ladies desire you would send a minute and circumstantial account of all that passed at it.

"In the House of Lords we had a debate about bringing in Irish cattle. The Duke of Newcastle made use of the expression that beef gave additional courage to the soldiers, upon which some wag,† for the house was vastly crowded, dropped the following epigram:

> "Since beef adds more courage to soldiers in battle,
> I consent to the bringing in Irish cattle;
> But add then a clause to the bill, which annuls
> All free importation of *Irish bulls*.

"I hope the two horses, as well as the master and the man, hold out well, and will all return to town again in good health and flesh. If you bring back with you all the money you pick up on the road, no matter what way, your horse will find you more weighty on your return than in your setting out.

"Adieu, dear Colman, don't fail to write to me as often as you can, for I wish you very well, and am sincerely

Yours, BATH."

* Miss Letitia Gumley, sister to the Countess of Bath, married to Lancelot Charles Lake, Esq.

† Possibly the Earl was here showing himself up as a wag.

Colman's "Two Odes to Obscurity and to Oblivion," parodies on those of Mason and Gray, were first printed in 1759, and subsequently republished by their author in 1787.* During his progress at Westminster, and whilst at college, he formed those literary connections with whom he continued in friendship till they severally dropped off the stage of life. Churchill,† Lloyd, Bonnel Thornton, and other celebrated wits, were among his intimate associates, and gave éclat to his name by their notice of him in their several compositions.

Even so early as the publication of the "Rosciad," Churchill proposed Colman as a proper judge to decide on the pretensions of the several candidates for the chair of Roscius, and only complains that he might be thought too juvenile for so important an award. Speaking of the proposed judges who were supported by the suffrages of the public, he says:

> "For Colman many; but the peevish tongue
> Of prudent age, found out that he was young."

The season of 1760–61 had scarcely commenced with Foote's inimitable performances in "The Minor," and the hornpipe attractions of "Nancy Dawson,"

* In the second volume of his "Collected Works," in prose and verse.

† Charles Churchill, born 1731, was placed at Westminster School in 1739, then superintended by Dr. Nicols: thence he was admitted of Trinity College, Cambridge, but immediately returned to London, and never after visited the University; his early abandonment of which was possibly an attachment formed

when the death of King George the Second caused the theatres to be closed, from Monday, October 27th (His Majesty dying on the previous Saturday), until Monday, November 17th. "Richard the Third" was, by royal command, performed at Drury Lane on the 21st instant; Richard was played by Garrick. Lloyd, gratified probably by his acceptation of "The Actor," wrote "Shakspeare, an epistle to Garrick," with an "Ode to Genius," by the Author of "The Actor." It was published by the Dodsleys, on the 20th, the day preceding the King's visit to the Theatre, and was the property of Tom Davies,* but appeared with Dodsley's name in the title, they having published Lloyd's former work. On November 29th, proposals were issued for publishing by subscription, in a half-guinea volume, the poems of Robert Lloyd, M.A.; so early had his necessities, caused

while at Westminster School, and which ended in a clandestine marriage at the Fleet, about 1750.

In 1758, upon the death of his father, who was for many years Curate and Lecturer of the parish of St. John the Evangelist, Westminster, he was appointed to succeed him; and, for some time, performed the duties with external decency at least. He was, however, immoderately fond of pleasure, a constant attendant of the theatres, and the associate of men who united wit and profligacy, and qualified themselves for moral teachers by practising the vices they censured in others; still, perhaps, those dissipations, while they ruined Churchill's character and impaired his health, were not indirectly the precursors to his celebrity in public life.

* Becket, who had been shopman to Andrew Millar, the bookseller, in the house lately occupied by Mr. Cadell, in the Strand, commenced business on his own account in January 1760, at the Tully's Head, near Surrey Street, in the Strand. In the same month, Tom Davies, then of Drury Lane Theatre, also started as a bookseller, in Russell Street, Covent Garden.

by his imprudence, rendered this appeal to his friends and the public desirable.

Churchill's Rosciad occasioned much consternation among the players upon its appearance. King, in particular, was much aggrieved, as appears by Garrick's letter to Colman, on Nov. 21, 1760, on which night His Majesty came to the theatre to witness his performance of Richard.

"Dear Colman,

"I received this at noon, but pray let me see *you* after the play. If the King comes to Richard, I shall go to bed; if not, Hubert will call upon me, with you, in Southampton Street. Poor King, he is most miserable.

"My love to Churchill, his being sick of Richard, was perceived about the house.

I am, Dear Coley,

Yours ever and affectionately,

D. Garrick."

"The Public Advertiser," Garrick's organ for his theatrical announcements, intimated, Dec. 2, that "Polly Honeycombe," a dramatic novel, of one act, would be performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, at the end of the week; and, on Thursday the 4th, it was stated that the eighth representation of "The Minor," was deferred till Tuesday, on account of the new petite pièce called "Miss Honeycombe." So, it appears that the puff preliminary was as much in vogue at that period, as it has been ever since. On Friday, December 5, "Merope" was played as the first piece; and as the bills announced, "to which will be added, never performed before, "Polly Honeycombe," a Dramatic Novel; the principal parts by

Messrs. Yates, King, Bransby ; Mesdames Kennedy, Bradshaw, and Pope."

Colman's first attempt was highly successful ; it was a satire levelled at the ridiculous prevalence of novel reading, and the name of "Honeycombe" was derived from that assumed in the vapouring flourish of the editor of the "Royal Female Magazine ; or, Ladies General Repository of Pleasure and Improvement, conducted by Charles Honeycombe, Esquire !" which was probably one of Lloyd's unsuccessful schemes. The first number appeared in February 1760, and the second was embellished with a portrait of Garrick as "Abel Drugger."

After the fifth night, it was stated, that "Polly Honeycombe" would not be performed again until the middle of the ensuing month of January ; the managers being obliged to interrupt the run of any new piece, however successful, on account of the number of their engagements. Such, in truth, appears to have been Garrick's finesse ; but the remonstrance of Colman caused a different version ; which was, that it was only deferred until the ensuing week, on account of the production of "The Enchanter," in which the celebrated Leoni made his *début*, as a youth, on Saturday, December 13th. "Polly Honeycombe" was played a sixth time, which should have been the Author's night, on Wednesday, December 17th, when Shakspeare's "King John" was revived ; "King John, by Sheridan, Falconbridge by Garrick, and Constance Mrs. Yates." The bills announced, no admittance behind the scenes, nor in the orchestra ; and both pieces were repeated on the

Saturday following, to immensely crowded houses; Garrick being the supposed or accredited author of the Farce. The prologue and epilogue to "Polly Honeycombe" were printed in the Public Advertiser, Friday, December 12th. To the prologue some additional lines were added by Garrick, and spoken by King, on its being reported that the former was the author of the piece.

"Thus of our Polly, having rightly spoke,
Now for our author—but without a joke;
Though wits and journals, who ne'er fibb'd before,
Have laid his bantling at a certain door,
Where lying store of faults, they 'd fain heap more.
I now declare it as a serious truth,
'Tis the first folly of a simple youth,
Caught and deluded by our harlot plays—
Then crush not in the shell this infant Bayes!
Exert your favour to a young beginner,
Nor use the stripling like a battered sinner!"

It was stated in the same paper, of December 18, that the farce of "Polly Honeycombe" would be acted for the author's benefit the week after the holidays; and on December 31, Ben Jonson's "Every Man in his Humour," with "Polly Honeycombe," were played, as announced in the bills, "for the benefit of the Author of the farce."

So tenaciously was the secret of the authorship kept, that Garrick, who played Kitely that evening, before dressing for the part, took a survey of the Theatre, and in the annexed letter, which he addressed to Colman on that occasion, spoke only of him in the third person.

"My Dear Sir,

"I have this moment taken a peep at the house, for the author of Polly Hon. The pit and galleries are crammed —the boxes full to the last rows—and every thing as you and I could wish for our friend. I am most happy about it, and could not help communicating it to one I so much love and esteem. Pray let me see you at your arrival—the second music—and time for me to put on my fool's coat. Yours ever and most affectionately,

D. Garrick."

The farce of "Polly Honeycombe" was evidently produced without allowing Colman's name as the author to transpire. This was probably owing to a suggestion of Garrick, upon which he frequently acted, with reference to his own productions; nor was the Earl of Bath in any way apprized of these proceedings, till the great success of "The Jealous Wife," established Colman's dramatic fame.

Kenrick, in his Epistle to George Colman, says, "It is notorious, that Colman's first and best play, 'The Jealous Wife' was, like many others offered to the stage, a mere *rudis indigestaque moles,* when first presented to Garrick, who, with his usual alacrity, exerted his great abilities to reduce it into its present form." The reader, however, who is desirous of being more particularly acquainted with its merits, as it now stands, is referred to the critique inserted in the Monthly Review, about the time of its first exhibition, written by Colman's particular and very sincere friend, Captain Dr. John Berkenhout.

Garrick's misgivings in the following letter, as to

his study of the part of Oakley in "The Jealous Wife" are very amusing, more especially when it is considered that, after all, he was the original representative of that character :—

"My Dear Sir, January 1761.

"As I am confident that you are well assured of my goodwill and friendship to you, I shall open my heart to you. I have had Burton with me, to settle and go over the part of Oakley. I have considered it thoroughly, and I find that it will be impossible for me to get it so soon into my head, as I imagined. It is very long and particular, and will require more time to be master of it, than I can well spare. I have not slept these three nights last past, these matters have so perplexed and distressed me. Mr. Murphy has kept us off so long, and Lovemore (my character) * is so much more than I expected, that I must desire you to let me take a less part—the Major, or Sir Harry, or Charles; I have no objection to any of them. If Mr. Hume will defer his performance to the next year, to which purpose I shall write immediately to him, I can master Oakley very well by the time; but he is so connected with Lord Bute, and a much greater personage, that I must be a little delicate in that business. I wish that you would call upon me any morning this week, and let us consult, for I am at present very unhappy about it: I am this moment going upon the stage, but am at all times, and in all circumstances,

Most truly yours,

D. Garrick."

At this period there appears to have been a quarrel between Murphy and Colman, and the breach

* In Murphy's comedy of "The Way to Keep Him," first performed January 24, 1761.

in all probability was created by the rivalry in authorship, and the success of Colman. Murphy accused Colman of having entered into a league with Churchill and Robert Lloyd, imagining that such a triumvirate would be able to bear down all before them. Murphy also insinuates that there were certain artifices in the conduct of Colman which had come to his knowledge, and as they appeared to him in a bad light, he never would listen to any terms of a reconciliation. He, however, bore testimony to the excellence of the comedy of "The Jealous Wife," in the following sentence, "A more just imitation of nature was never seen, the play met with applause, and has from that time kept its rank on the stage."

The first night of "The Jealous Wife," was on Thursday, February 26, 1761. Cross, in his "Diary," says, that "The Jealous Wife" met with greater approbation than any thing since "The Suspicious Husband."

Colman dedicated "The Jealous Wife" to his patron, in the year 1751. This refutes the report, which obtained general belief, that he forfeited Lord Bath's affection and favour, through his pursuit of the drama.

The St. James's Chronicle, it appears, was established by a co-proprietorship. Bonnel Thornton, Garrick, and Colman, certainly had shares, and by their joint industry drew the productions of the wits of the day to that paper; which, as a depository of literary intelligence, literary contests, and anecdotes, and articles of wit and humour, soon

eclipsed all its rivals. Colman exerted the full force of his talents to promote the interests of this newspaper, in a series of essays, and humorous sketches on occasional subjects. Among these, the paper called "The Genius," which was commenced June 11, 1761, and continued at irregular intervals, to the fifteenth number, appears, on the whole, superior to "The Connoisseur" in general merit. The experience of the writer had ripened; there is more solidity, and the humour is of a cast infinitely more chaste and classical. Colman's occasional contributions were very numerous, and upon every topic—politics, manners, and the drama. A selection of them constitute part of his prose works, published by himself in 1787.

The following invitation from Lord Bath to Tunbridge Wells, is in a rather more cordial strain than was usual with that nobleman.

"Dear Coley, Tunbridge Wells, Aug. 6, 1761.

"I have had two letters from you, to which I would sooner have returned an answer, but that you have been so much upon the ramble, that it was uncertain where to catch you, whether picking up money on the road, or distributing justice from the bench. I fancy the likliest place to meet you is in Lincoln's Inn, to which I direct this, to invite you to Tunbridge, when all your legal affairs are finished. Dr. Bartholomew is here, and expects you, but I cannot say there are many here of your female acquaintance; perhaps Dr. Douglas may spare you a lady or two, for he has abundance that belong to him, and to his lottery-table. We have had the hottest weather I ever felt, which I believe, (though very troublesome to us all) is of great use to us water-drinkers, at least; I am sure they agree very well

with me, and have done me much service. Come to us when you please, you will find the room ready, excellent soups every day at dinner, and most admirable fish, fresh from the salt sea. Adieu.

I am yours, BATH."

During the visit to Tunbridge Wells, it was suggested that Mrs. Carter should collect and publish her Poems in one volume, with a dedication to the Earl of Bath, with whom the idea seems to have arisen. Lord Lyttleton contributed a page of commendatory lines in blank verse, and it is a singular fact that the Earl wrote the Dedication to *himself.** The volume was published in 1762.

The following letter from Lord Bath is in his old strain of incitement to Colman, lest he may forget "the main chance."

"DEAR COLEY, December 18, 1761.

"I thank you for your letter, and I have had one likewise from Miss Seare, in answer to that which you gave her from me. I find she does not think of coming to town, till towards the spring. I suppose you dance every ball-night country dances with his R. H. the Duke of York; you should try to be appointed his attorney-general. He has, I hear, made Moysey his physician. Are you in pursuit of any other more material business, such as following any fine woman, with a fortune of one hundred thousand pounds, or do you design to return to us again, just as wise and witty as you went, with only a little less money in your pocket? Lord Pulteney wants much to see you, and hopes you may be grown a little since he left you. We

* "Memoirs of Mrs. Carter," Vol. I., p. 237.

are all pleased with "The Genius:"* we suppose you wrote it on the road, and sent it to town; it is extremely pretty, and well written. You have, no doubt, heard of the rude and foul-mouthed attack made on Mr. Pitt in the House of Commons, by one Colonel Barré, whom all the world blames most extremely, so that I suppose the gentleman will be muzzled for the future. Doctor Douglas sends you his compliments, Lord Pulteney, and Lady Mary Carr, who are just going to sit down to dinner with me, send their services, and I am,

Dear Coley, your's affectionately,

To George Colman, Esq. at Bath. BATH."

"The Musical Lady," a farce, in which the folly of pretending to a fine ear, without a true taste, is justly exposed to ridicule, was performed for the first time at Drury Lane Theatre, March 6, 1762, and met with success. The incident was originally part of the comedy of "The Jealous Wife," but discarded by Garrick as a mere surplusage. The farce was inimitably acted by Yates, King, and Miss Pope.

Colman's intercourse with Garrick and Drury Lane Theatre, as a dramatist, led to a closer connection between him and Miss Sarah Ford,† who became the mother of the late George Colman, and to whom she gave birth October 21, 1762.

* The series of essays, under the title of "The Genius," before alluded to.

† Miss Ford had been the mistress of Mossop, and by him had a daughter, who was possibly the means of the mother's support before she was Colman's mistress. There is reason to believe that the infant Miss Ford was employed at Drury Lane Theatre in 1761, and that she performed in "The Rehearsal," played before their Majesties George III. and Charlotte, in the September of that year, immediately subsequent to the royal nuptials.

In 1763, D. Martin engraved a portrait of the Earl of Bath, from a picture by Allan Ramsay, in the possession of Lord Lyttleton. It gave occasion to show the Earl's acquiescence in his protégé's theatrical connections. All his repeated admonitions to *Coley* "not to throw away his money and time idly, in running after plays, of which he knew he was fond," but to stick to the law, and follow the steps of the Attorney-General, end in a request to procure his Lordship the *honour* that a print (probably his own portrait, and for which he prudently declines the expense of a frame), may be hung up by Mrs. Garrick.

"Dear Coley,

"I have sent you two of the prints you saw yesterday; pray present one of them, in my name and with my humble service, to Mrs. Garrick, and let her know, if she will knock to pieces any old deal box, and make a kind of frame, and hang the print up in any chamber that belongs to her, it will be doing me and the picture more honour than either deserve. Fix a day when Garrick and you will come and dine with

Your humble Servant,

To Mr. Colman. Bath."

In the "Cobbler of Cripplegate's" Letter to Robert Lloyd, A. M., first printed in the St. James's Magazine, April 1763,* Colman has thus mentioned Garrick and himself:

"Garrick 's a dealer in grimaces,
A haberdasher of wry faces,
A hypocrite in all his stages,
Who laughs and cries for hire and wages;

* Reprinted in "Colman's Prose and Verse," 1787.

As undertakers' men draw grief
From onion in their handkerchief,
Like real mourners cry and sob,
And of their passions make a job.

" And Colman too, that little sinner,
That essay weaver, drama spinner,
Too much the comic sock will use,
For 'tis the law must find him shoes;
And though he thinks on fame's wide ocean
He swims, and has a pretty notion,—
Inform him, Lloyd, for all his grin,
That Harry Fielding holds his chin."

During the Encœnia at Oxford, in honour of the Peace, in July 1763, Colman published a paper entitled " Terræ Filius;" the first number, dated July 5th, he forwarded to Chatsworth, to Garrick, who, with Quin, was then on a visit to the Duke of Devonshire. Garrick thus acknowledged its arrival:

" Dear Colman,

" Many thanks to you for " Terræ Filius:" it is very lively, and I long to see the second number.

" Pray write to me, and let me know how the town speaks of our friend Churchill's Epistle.* It is the most bloody performance that has been published in my time. I am very desirous to know the opinion of people, for I am really much, very much hurt at it: his description of his age and infirmities is surely too shocking and barbarous. Is Hogarth really ill, or does he meditate revenge? Every article of news about these matters will be most agreeable to me: pray write me a heap of stuff, for I cannot be easy till I know all about Churchill, Hogarth, &c. How did the " Terræ Filius" work at Oxford?

* Churchill's Epistle to Hogarth.

"Have you yet received any letter from Lord Bath? Pray be particular in *that*; for, though my curiosity is much concerned in my former questions, my heart and soul are interested in the last.

Yours ever, my dear Colman,

D. Garrick."

The following, from Lord Bath, was written during a journey on the continent.

"Dear Coley, Spa, July 13, 1763.

"Why are you so suspicious of my being angry with you? I can assure you that the only reason why I did not take you with me was because I apprehended your stay in London might be absolutely necessary with regard to Lord Pulteney's affairs; as it was not till the morning we set out quite determined, whether we were to proceed by arbitration or by your proving of the will.* I wish now that you

* Viscount Pulteney, member for Westminster, the only son of the Earl of Bath, died at Madrid, February 12, 1763; and appears to have been allowed so little to support his quality, that at his decease his affairs were under great embarrassments. Colman's adroitness was therefore fully required in their arrangement; and as some excuse for the cause, Mrs. Carter, in a letter to Mrs. Montagu, after the Earl of Bath's death, states that "his own disposition was naturally compassionate and generous; but his unfortunate connection with a wife of a very contrary disposition, and to whom he was too good-naturedly compliant, had checked the tendency of his own heart, and induced a fatal habit, which he found it difficult to alter at so advanced an age; yet he nobly broke through it, in paying above twenty thousand pounds of Lord Pulteney's debts, for which there could have been no legal demand on him."

In what the nobleness of the act consisted, we are at a loss to discover. The father, immensely rich, constrains the son to become indebted to the public to support his grade in society. This was really at best but an act of justice, even then too tardily delayed.

had been with us ; the waters, which have done us all much good, might have been of use to you likewise, after your illness, and you would have had an opportunity of making acquaintance with a vast number of princes and princesses, with whom you might have played at whist every night, for twopence a corner.* Dr. Douglas has struck up a great intimacy with the Bishop of Augsburg ; he often dines with him, and constantly swallows a large quantity of Toká, as it agrees greatly with the Spa waters. We have here at least an hundred English lords, gentlemen, and ladies; balls now and then, a play three times a week, with a tolerable set of strollers, that do pretty well in comedy, but make wretched work with a French tragedy.

" I suppose you are often at Hampton : make my compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Garrick, I should have said my love to her ; but whisper that only in her ear, for he must know nothing of the matter. I was not a very dangerous man when I left England, but the waters are rejuvenescent,

* Whist at twopence a corner, or even lesser stakes, appears to have been very agreeable to Mrs. Carter and the Earl. On August 10th she wrote :—" We are going to be very illustrious to-day, the Bishop of Augsburg and his suite, the Princess Esterhazy, and Lady Mary Coke, are to dine with my Lord Bath. Dining with princes and princesses is one way of life, and playing at penny quadrille is another ; but it is a mighty good thing in its turn, and I can very cordially accommodate myself to both." Indeed so it would seem, as in reference to the society of Lady Westmoreland and Lady Primrose, she had previously observed, " I am going with my Lord Bath to play quadrille with them, at the expense of Mrs. Montagu's purse, for I never give myself the airs of playing with such personages on my own account. " We have besides," continues the lady, " the rooms, a French play ; the princes, and consequently all the world besides, go every night ; when I say all the world, I do not mean to include myself. A company of French comedians is a great resource to about a thousand souls, who have no earthly thing to do, unless they go out to fetch it."

and bid him beware of me when I return, for I shall be quite another creature.

"If Churchill's poem upon Hogarth is worth the postage, send it to me, but if it be long it will cost a huge sum. Perhaps you may hear of somebody coming this way, who may be willing to bring it, and wit pays no duty, either on importation or exportation. General Sebright brought me two pamphlets, one of which I think well written: it is called "The Constitution Asserted," printed for Becket; pray tell me who was the author.

"I am told that Wilkes* called the other day at my house, and asked how I did? Pray, when you see him, tell him I am pretty well, but very angry with him for kindling such a flame in our poor country, which God knows when it will be extinguished; our poor good king deserves better usage. Send me all the chit-chat news you can pick up, whether in Lincoln's Inn, Grub Street, or St. James's; let it be private scandal or political falsehoods; anything will amuse us at this distance, and do no manner of harm, for we shall have forgot it all before our return.

"I have written you a long letter, considering that I have this morning drank eight large glasses of water; and as I find my head begins to ache I will take my leave, assuring you that I am

Your true friend, and humble servant,

BATH."

* Colman had no doubt apprised the Earl of his emanations respecting the Encœnia, and possibly forwarded to him the "Terræ Filius." Mrs. Carter, writing to a relative on the 25th, has a paragraph with something of a malevolent tincture: "The Encœnia at Oxford is no more an object at Spa, than is the country of the great Mogul, so that I am entirely at a loss about the prize subjects. To the great mortification of my English vanity, the principal figure that we make in the Foreign Gazettes is contained in accounts of the proceedings in the affairs of Wilkes!"

Of this journey to Spa, Mrs. Carter narrates some curious memoranda. They landed at Calais at four o'clock in the morning, at the Lion d'Argent, a much better inn than any she had seen at Dover. A little *perruquier*, with a most magnificent *queue*, belonging to the inn, with whom she was on the most friendly terms imaginable, was her second page. Her first, a little French boy, with an English face, was provided for her by the Earl. Set out for Lisle on the 7th, where they arrived at night. Took a hackney coach, which is quite another thing than at London, for they are extremely easy and clean, and sit on springs, so that they turn in a place surprisingly small, and in this machine they visited the principal places. Arrived at Ghent at night, on the 9th, and at Brussels, in the afternoon of the 11th. The equipages consisted of the Earl's coach, a *vis-à-vis* in which were Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Carter, a post-chaise, and a *chasse-marine*, with ten or twelve outriders. The roads to Liege, which Mrs. Montagu humorously designated the Seven Dials of Europe, appeared fine, and certainly were so, but tore the English carriages to pieces. The Earl's coach lost the hind wheel, after they had proceeded eighteen miles from Brussels; however, after some repairs they went on in good spirits, excepting some apprehensions from the crippled state of the coach. The axle-tree broke, and the coach was overthrown with a violent crash, as they entered Liege, but the Earl and Mrs. Montagu escaped unhurt.

On the road to Spa, which they reached at six in

the afternoon, June 16th, the *chasse-marine* was overturned, and Mrs. Carter's little page gave her a terrible account of the mishap. At the Spa, Mrs. Montagu's house was opposite the Earl's; and Mrs. Carter, describing it, observes: "Mrs. Montagu's chamber looks upon a river, and mine upon a wooded mountain; so she is entertained by the gurgling of the water, and I by the song of a cuckoo!" They dined each day with Lord Bath, and usually went with him to the fountain in the morning. The Prince Bishop of Augsburg kept a table, and invited all the company by turns: "We have already been there three times; *c'est une visite fort illustre et bien triste.* The dining with a sovereign prince is an affair of more honour than pleasure, and is nothing like society; one circumstance is very aukward to little folks, that the attendants are all men of quality, and we must either choke with thirst, or employ a Count or a Baron to bring a glass of water. An Excellence, with an embroidered star, comes to us from His Highness, when dinner is on table, which is half an hour after twelve!"

On the 8th of July, Mrs. Carter wrote, "There is a world of English arrived within this week, very few French, but German counts and barons innumerable. The Prince and Princess Ferdinand of Prussia, Duke Ferdinand and Princess Amelia of Prussia, the Hereditary Prince and Princess of Brunswick; Madame Keith, the *grande maîtresse*, a Prussian, but whose face had learned Scotch; the Countess de Choiseul, from Paris, with a face like a

coach-wheel, *cum multis aliis;*" which she sums up "as grave bishops, serene princesses, English lords and ladies, high Dutch barons, low Dutch burgomasters, and Flemish fat gentlewomen."

In reference to the German princes, she observes: "Their manners are unaffected and agreeable; but their dress so ridiculously stiff, that the first time I saw them all together, they put me in mind of King Pharoah's court in a puppet show!

"The variety of dress in the company here makes the first *coup d'œil* on the walks of the Geronsterre very amusing. Priests and hussars, beaux and hermits, nuns and fine ladies, stars and crosses, cowls and ribbons, all blended together in the most lively and picturesque manner imaginable.

"The streets are all day long crowded with people, without any bustle or noise: all the company is very peacable and quiet, and there seems to be none of those fashionable pests of society, the bucks and choice spirits, among us; and I thought I felt a little foolish at hearing one of my foreign friends observe most maliciously, that it would not be known there was any of our country at Spa, if a footman did not now and then run through the streets, screaming in English after a strayed dog."

Colman's fear of offending the Earl has been apparent on more occasions than one; and it has long been the settled opinion of the world, that something of the kind had precluded his enjoying a larger share of the Earl's property than was bequeathed to him. In the "Particulars of his Life," written at the commencement of his illness,

which terminated fatally, he professed to give an account of some circumstances touching what had been supposed to be the leading feature in his character, in which the world had been most grossly deceived and mistaken. Colman attempted to show that these erroneous notions had been founded chiefly on two propositions, of which the first in date has reference to this period of his life, and as such is given in his own words:

"The first of these propositions is, that by my literary pursuits and dramatic compositions I lost the favour and affection of the Earl of Bath. That I had an early taste and relish for polite literature, and particularly for compositions of the stage, is most true; nor will I pretend to deny that I was betrayed into youthful follies and irregularities, which involved me in temporary inconveniences and distresses. To extricate myself from the embarrassments that those follies, ill suited to narrow circumstances, brought upon me, I had recourse to my pen, which was rarely used dramatically, or otherwise, but with a view to profit; the Earl of Bath, however, was so little displeased with these efforts, that he even countenanced and encouraged them, and often deigned to consider them as the earnest of something better that was to follow. So dear, indeed, did he hold me, that he has not only in words and in writing told me, that he considered me as his second son, but, in several wills and testaments executed during that period, and during the life of my dear friend and kinsman, Lord Pulteney, absolutely testified that he regarded

me in that light; nor did any of my theatrical productions abate his affection, or in the least tend to alter his intentions. A more fatal event was the cause of such alterations; I mean the early and unexpected death of Lord Pulteney. From that moment he new-modelled his will, in which he still made a handsome provision for me, but left it to the discretion of General Pulteney to consign, or not consign to me the estate, which he had in many preceding wills absolutely devised to me, in case of the death of his only son, Lord Pulteney.

"The little that has been already said on this subject, is, perhaps, more than sufficient to refute the charge contained in the first proposition; but it may not be amiss to speak of one or two circumstances, before we entirely dismiss it. I have mentioned, that Lord Bath considered me as his second son; and, indeed, his avowed partiality for me, induced many persons, not intimately acquainted with the history and connections of the family, to think me really so, and of consequence to report it as a fact. Not to dwell on the grossness of the supposition, implying a criminal intercourse between his lordship and his wife's sister, there were certain physical impossibilities in the case. My mother went over to my father, who was resident at Florence, four or five years before I was born. Mr. Pulteney and his family were in England; I had a sister born there two years before me; so that neither of us, natives of Florence, could derive our origin from my mother's brother-in-law, considering the unfortunate intervention of the Alps and the Me-

diterranean. We had, indeed, each of us the honour of a royal godfather and godmother, as children of a British plenipotentiary, from whom we took our several names of George and Caroline.

" The other circumstances, referred to above, come closer to the point in question, and, indeed, form a chain in the succeeding narrative; and it gives me no small satisfaction to be able to seize this opportunity of paying a due tribute of affection and respect to a most ingenious, learned, and worthy man. The story will speak his eulogium. The man I mean was my most esteemed and honoured friend, the late Mr. Booth, of Lincoln's Inn.

" It was Mr. Booth who first acquainted me, very soon after the irretrievable loss of poor Lord Pulteney, of the new arrangements of Lord Bath's affairs. His lordship, however," says he, " assures me he has taken care of you; but that care, I dare say, will be very unequal to his original intentions. The world supposes, that the death of Lord Pulteney is a great event in your fortune. You and I know the contrary; and if you have a mind, I will still endeavour to enable you to make your fortune another way. Though you are my neighbour in Lincoln's Inn, and have your chambers in the next staircase to mine, yet I believe you have not hitherto thought of the law so seriously as I have done. If you have talents for the bar, you may make much more money than ever I have made; my religion has prevented my appearance there; yet my gains have not been inconsiderable, though less than what they have been rated. If you do *not* attend the bar, still

the law is no mean resource. I will, if you please, give you a plan of study; I will shew you every case I ever answered, and explain to you the principles on which I founded my opinions. My life is wearing; and as I go out of business, I will make it a point to bring you into it.

"This was the substance of what this good friend said to me on this occasion. I have every where endeavoured to clothe the matter as nearly as possible in his own expressions, and to the last words I could almost venture to swear.

"Though he had for some time shewed me many civilities, and even marks of friendship, yet I must confess that this touching instance of it almost overcame me. Penetrated with his kindness, and struck with the nicety of my situation, I seriously determined to avail myself of his most friendly offer, and to follow his advice."

The following letter from Garrick, still on a visit to the Duke of Devonshire, acknowledges the receipt of the conclusion of Colman's "Terræ Filius."

"Chatsworth, Monday, July 18, 1763.

"My Dear Colman,

"I have half a moment to let you know, that I received your last agreeable packet. I thank you from my soul for your literary turtle. Quin never eat half so much,* or so

* Quin's epicurean propensities were frequently the theme of Garrick's jokes, and he once urged them, in excuse for carrying with him to Bath, a wild turkey which Lord Halifax had sent him, when his impaired health had deprived him of the enjoyment of it.

greedily, of the real one, as I did of that you sent me—it was all green fat, and I have been at it again and again.

"I think Newberry* behaved very ill to you, and deserved correction, but I am so delicate about *women*, that I could wish that she had been exempted from the lash. I hope that you and yours are in possession of Mrs. Garrick's horse. I am sure that he will answer your ends. I shall be in London next Thursday sen'night, and hope to see you there. My Lord Duke (the best and most honourable of men) often speaks of you, and with great desire of knowing you. Were you near us, you would be happy to be with us; all mirth, bagatelle, liberty, and a little drinking at times.

Yours ever,

D. Garrick."

"The Duke of Cumberland is to be here the 26th, which makes our going sooner than we thought, or his Grace desired."

On September 15, 1763, Mr. and Mrs. Garrick set out from their house in Southampton Street, Covent Garden, for the Continent. They intended to take the tour of Italy. George Garrick was left to assist Lacy in the management, and Colman was assigned some share in the direction. This last event evinces the tact and policy of Garrick, as Colman

In the letter returning thanks to his Lordship, he writes, "when our old friend Quin was on one occasion ill, and had received a present, I believe from the same bounteous hand that has sent me mine, his Doctor told him, that he would not be fit to touch such a thing for a fortnight. 'Sh'ant I?' says Quin, 'then by G—— it shall travel with me till I am fit.'"

* John Newberry, bookseller, in St. Paul's Church-yard, he died in December 1767.

was so much connected with the public press of the period; besides the advantage that must accrue to the Theatre from his knowledge of, and zeal in, dramatic affairs.

The following is Garrick's first letter to Colman from abroad.

"My Dear Colman, Paris, Oct. 8, 1763.

"Though I have said in George's letter that I would not write to you till I got to Lyons, yet I can't help scribbling to you, for indeed, my dearest friend, there is no love lost between us. I am vastly happy that Powell strikes you so much in the rehearsal. He will surprise, and I most cordially wish it, for I think him a very worthy man. Pray take care that the play is quite ready, before he makes his appearance.

"You cannot imagine, my dear Colman, what honours I have received from all kind of people here. The nobles and the literati have made so much of me, that I am quite ashamed of opening my heart even to you. Marmontel has written to me the most flattering letter upon our supping together; I was in spirits, and so was the Clairon, who supped with us at Mr. Neville's. She got up to set me a going, and spoke something in Racine's Athalie, most charmingly; upon which, I gave them the dagger scene in "Macbeth," the curse in "Lear," and the falling asleep in "Sir John Brute," the consequence of which is, that I am now stared at, at the playhouse, and talked of, by gentle and simple, as the most wonderful wonder of wonders. The first person I find going to England, shall bring you Marmontel's letter. D'Alembert was one of the company, and sings my praises to all the authors of "The Encyclopædia." I am glad to hear of the Prologue, if they love to hear me abused, they will have great pleasure this winter, for I am told they have begun already; but I am happy, and in

spirits, and shall not read any newspapers on this side the Alps. Many thanks to you for the trouble you take about "The Invasion;" cut as you please. I leave it to you. As for "Midsummer Nights," &c., I think my presence will be necessary to get it up as it ought; however, if you want it, do for the best, and I'll ensure its success. Mr. Calcraft's behaviour astonishes me, but I hope Lacy will be firm. Pray continue in his good graces, for my sake. I am this moment going to see a new piece at the Italian Comedy, and last night I saw a new one at the French Comedy, taken from our "Tancred and Sigismunda." It had very indifferent success, but Clairon was great; she has her faults, between you and me; but I do not say so here, for she idolizes me.

"God bless you! my dear Colman, and have a corner of your eye upon my theatricals. I think you have begun well, and may continue it, if my partner will be advised, and stick tightly to his business; he behaves well, and I most sincerely wish, for all our sakes, that he may not want me. I have desired George to write his next letter to Florence. George has my direction, à Monsieur, Monsieur Garrick, chez le Marquess Friscobaldi et fils à Florence. Pray put in a postscript, that I may comfort myself in foreign parts with the sight of your most agreeable scrawl. Once more, my worthy friend, adieu! My wife sends her love to you *de bon cœur*. Ever and ever yours and yours,

D. GARRICK."

The foregoing agreeable epistle may require a little explanation on some of its points, which we shall endeavour to elucidate without the repetition of marginal notes. George Garrick was brother to the Roscius, and was always ready at his call; he was a sort of acting manager (as it is now denominated) in Drury Lane Theatre; the duties of that

office being to supervise the whole detail of the establishment. In fact, the acting manager of a theatre is the first lieutenant of a ship; a great part of the responsibility rests on his shoulders, though, to the world at large, he seldom appears as the conspicuous person: the Captain, or principal manager, generally taking all the credit of his labours. But to return to George Garrick, we must relate two little anecdotes. George was affectionately attached to David, and held him in great awe; Garrick, when acting, was extremely nervous about any noise made behind the scenes, as it destroyed his effects; consequently, George was accustomed to parade up and down on the stage, and if any persons were talking, to exclaim, "Hush! hush!" This was his constant habit.

The salary of George Garrick was considerable in the theatre, and it was more than once enquired, why, or for what, George Garrick was paid that amount? Charles Bannister in a moment solved the question, "It is *hush money*," said he.

George Garrick usually inquired every night, on coming behind the scenes, "Has David wanted me?" On its being idly asked how George came to die so soon after the demise of his celebrated relation, the answer was—"David wanted him."

D'Alembert, one of the ablest mathematicians of the age, and who by a singular and happy versatility of genius, to a profound skill in the abstract sciences, joined all the accomplishments of an elegant, vivacious, and entertaining writer, was one of the principal editors of "The Encyclopædia," and Se-

cretary to the French Academy. He died at Paris, October 28, 1783.

The prologue* mentioned in the letter, Colman had written to "Philaster," in which there is no further mention of Garrick than--

> "While one great Comptroller,
> No more a Manager, turns arrant stroller,
> Let new adventurers your care engage,
> And nurse the infant saplings of the Stage!"

The "Invasion" spoken of, was the pantomime called "Harlequin's Invasion," produced in 1759, and the "Midsummer Nights," &c. was Shakspeare's play as altered by Colman, and performed in 1763, without success. Mr. Calcraft's behaviour relates to some proposed engagement of Mrs. George Ann Bellamy. Lacy was Garrick's partner in Drury Lane Theatre.

Garrick writes, "I am happy, and in spirits." It must be remarked that the great actor was always "in spirits," when he shone as first fiddle in any or every society. A *jeu d'esprit*, written by Sir Joshua Reynolds, to illustrate a remark he had made, that "Doctor Johnson considered Garrick as his property, and would never suffer any one to praise or abuse him but himself," was privately printed by his niece, the Marchioness of Thomond, in 1816, 8vo; and in a dialogue between Gibbon

* Lord Byron, in a letter to Lord Holland, written in Sept. 1812, says, "There are but two decent prologues in our tongue: Pope's to Cato,—Johnson's to Drury Lane. These, with the epilogue to "The Distrest Mother," and, I think, one of Goldsmith's, and a prologue of Old Colman's to Beaumont and Fletcher's "Philaster," are the best things of the kind we have."

and the Doctor, the former professing to abuse Garrick, Johnson defending him, some illustration is afforded as to the means adopted by him in securing that attention:

GIBBON. "You must allow, Dr. Johnson, that Garrick was too much a slave to fame, or, rather, to the mean ambition of living with the great; terribly afraid of making himself cheap, even with them, by which he debarred himself of much pleasant society: employing so much attention, and so much management upon such little things, implies, I think, a little mind. It was observed by his friend Colman, that he never went into company but with a plot how to get out of it; he was every minute called out, and went off, or returned, as there was, or was not, a probability of his shining."

JOHNSON. "In regard to his mean ambition, as you call it, of living with the great; what was the boast of Pope, and is every man's wish, can be no reproach to Garrick. He who says he despises it, knows he lies. That Garrick husbanded his fame, the fame which he had justly acquired, both at the theatre and at the table, is not denied; but where is the blame, either in the one or the other, of leaving as little as he could to chance. Sir, Garrick left nothing to chance!"

Colman's revival, with some alterations of Beaumont and Fletcher's "Philaster," which introduced Powell to the stage, was performed at Drury Lane, on Saturday, October 8, 1763. In the play originally are many beauties, and the unravelling of the plot is so natural, that the Duke of Buckingham,

in his "Essay on Poetry," proposes it as a model for all authors, observing—

> "The occasion should as naturally fall,
> As when Bellario confesses all!"

Colman's alterations were effected with great propriety, and with an eye strictly in support of the reputation of the parent authors.

Woodfall, in the Public Advertiser of Oct. 10, 1763, bestows a just encomium on the merits of the *débutant*, which were subsequently verified.*

The success of "Philaster," induced Colman again to advertise,† as lately published, "Critical Reflections on the Old English Dramatic Writers, addressed to David Garrick, Esq., by the author of 'The Jealous Wife.'"

On Friday, November 4, 1763, Colman produced his farce in two acts, of "The Deuce is in Him," which had been previously read and approved of by Garrick. The subject was taken from one of Marmontel's Tales,‡ and the story of Mademoiselle Florival, related in The British Magazine, both happily interwoven. The farce was greatly applauded, as indeed it deserved to be, and was for several nights a favourite entertainment.

On Monday, November 21st, "Philaster" was per-

* "Philaster," with Colman's alterations, was printed for the Tonsons, and published by Tom Davies, on the 13th of the same month.

† Public Advertiser, October 21, 1763.

‡ "Marmontel's Moral Tales," translated from the French, by Churchill, C. Dennis, and Robert Lloyd, were published at the same time.

formed; and "The Deuce is in Him," for the benefit of the Author of the farce.

In the following letter, Garrick gives a very amusing account of his Italian tour.

"My Dear Colman, Naples, Dec. 24, 1763.

"*Per varios casus*, we are at last arrived at our journey's end, and a very long one it has been. I have now time to shake my feathers a little, and open my heart to thee, thou best of friends!

"We got to this place, the 17th, after a most disagreeable journey from Rome, for we were taken in the midst of the heavy rains here, and were well soaked with them all the way. At present the weather is inconceivably fine, and we are basking in a warm sun, with the Mediterranean at our feet, and Mount Vesuvius in our view. Though it is Christmas, we have green-peas every day, and dine with our windows open. These are our pleasures, in part; as for our distresses since we left Rome, which have been as ridiculous as unexpected, and are the common occurrences upon this road, I shall reserve them for our social hours at Hampton. We are all at this moment, Biddy* not excepted, in the highest spirits, and I am much the better for my expedition.

"My Lady Oxford, who is settled here, and has the greatest interest with the first people, has been most uncommonly kind to us. I am to have the honour and satisfaction of seeing the King's Italian actors perform

* Biddy was Mrs. Garrick's lap-dog, and at this date was growing into years, as she is mentioned in a letter of the Marquis of Hartington to Garrick, dated in Dublin, May 1755. Mrs. Cibber, in October 1765, writes to Garrick, "If Biddy has any children, I should be infinitely obliged to Mrs. Garrick and you, to spare me one." Her own lap-dog, whom she had ludicrously named *Swivel Eye*, was then defunct.

before him, in the palace, a most extraordinary favour. They perform extempore, and the nobleman who stands in the place of the Lord Chamberlain, has sent me word, that if I will write down any dramatic fable, and give the argument only of the scenes, they shall play it before me in twenty-four hours after, as the greatest compliment they can pay me. I shall work at it to-morrow. I hear there is one great genius among the performers.

"The situation and climate of this place are most extraordinary, and the people are still more so. They are a new race of beings, and I have the highest entertainment in going amongst them, and observing their characters, from the highest to the lowest. I was last night at their great theatre, San Carlo; a most magnificent one indeed. I was really astonished at first coming into it; it was quite full, and well lighted up; but it is too great, and the singers were scarcely heard. The famous Gabrielli pleased me much; she has a good person, is the best actress I ever saw on an opera stage, and has the most agreeable voice I ever heard; she sings more to the ear than to the heart. I cannot quit you till I say something about Rome. I hardly slept the night before I arrived there, with the thoughts of seeing it. My heart beat high, my imagination expanded itself, and my eyes flashed again, as I drew near the Porta del Popolo; but the moment I entered it, I fell at once from my airy vision and Utopian ideas, into a very dirty ill-looking *place*, as they call it, with three crooked streets in front, terminated indeed at this end with two tolerable churches. What a disappointment! My spirits sunk, and it was with reluctance that I was dragged in the afternoon to see the Pantheon; but, my God! what was my pleasure and surprise! I never felt so much in my life as when I entered that glorious structure. I gaped, but could not speak for some minutes. It is so very noble, that it has not been in the power of modern

frippery or Popery, for it is a Church you know, to extinguish its grandeur and elegance.

" Here I began to think myself in *old* Rome, and when I saw the ruins of the famous amphitheatre—*omnis Cæsareo cedat labor amphitheatro*—I then felt my own littleness, and was convinced that the Romans were as much superior to the moderns in every thing, as Vespasian's amphitheatre was to Broughton's. It is impossible, my dear Colman, to have any idea of these things, from any prints that have been made of them. All modern performances look better upon paper; but these ruins are not to be conceived but *by the sensible and true avouch of your own eyes.* Though I am pleased, much pleased with Naples, I have such a thirst to return to Rome, as cannot possibly be slaked, till I have drank up half the Tiber, which, however, in its present state, is but a scurvy draught. It is very strange, that so much good poetry should be thrown away upon such a pitiful river; it is no more comparable to our Thames, than our modern poets are to their Virgils and Horaces. I was so taken up for the fortnight I was at Rome, in seeing ruins, statues, pictures, and palaces, that I had not the least inclination to see his Holiness and his troop of cardinals, though they had two or three public days when I was there. I shall have their blessings in the Holy Week.

" I attend Lord and Lady Spencer to-morrow, to Herculaneum, where I am told they have dug up every utensil that was in use among the Romans, and have got even a lady's toilette entire; the lady herself was found dressing herself, and in the act of sticking a bodkin into her hair; which bodkin is of a most elegant make, not much unlike a modern one, with the difference of a Jupiter, or Minerva, carved at the end of it.

" Next week, we shall mount to see the top of Vesuvius; it is a most terrible object indeed, and the greatest natural wonder I have ever yet seen. In short, we are encompassed

with classical prodigies, and when we shall be able to get out of this enchanting circle, I cannot possibly tell. I shall write by the next post to brother George, from whom I expect a letter very soon, though I received one from him, and another from you at Rome.

" I have seen the St. James's Chronicle here, and from that and other papers I see that " The Deuce is in Him," goes on as my heart could wish. I have seen letters, where King is much praised, and Miss Plym ; but surely O'Brien and Pope must bear the bell. The poor " Midsummer Night's Dream," I find, has failed. I know the author, and love him, though he abuses the *grown* gentlemen and ladies.

" Mrs. Cibber, I find, is still prudent, and will run no risks of reputation to support poor Old Drury, to whom she has many, many obligations. What is become of the " Invasion," the " Dupe," and the " New Entertainment ?" I hope I shall have some account of them, and a good one, in your next. How does Powell go on ? does he keep, or lose his ground ? If he is to be advised, don't let him play the fool, as others have done ; remember me to all of them whom you think deserve my remembrance. Send me some news, dear Colman, as soon as you receive this. My love to George ; I have not yet received his letter to Florence. If Clutterbuck is among you, my best affections to him too, and thank him for his delightful letter ; tell him I hope to have the *solid pudding* instead of the *praise*. I think hitherto that my plan of operations has been as nearly followed, as the circumstances would admit of, so that be the success good or bad, I have my share of the *praise*, as well as of the *pudding ;* that for Clutterbuck. Pray desire George to let me know how David and all his children are, particularly in his next. My wife sends her love to him, and you, and Clutterbuck.

" Your story of Hubert and his family, have not surprised me, as we received a letter from Mrs. Hubert, and one from

Castlefranc: there never, sure, was such a mean scoundrel. He had no way to excuse the meanness of his behaviour to us, but by pretending a falsehood. I was an entire stranger to the whole, upon my honour, so that it is impossible my wife could suspect her jewels were changed without acquainting me with it—proof positive. Mrs. Hubert might have spared herself the trouble of sending such a letter after Mrs. Garrick to Florence, and she will be sorry that she wrote it, when she knows the truth, as I suppose she may before this.

What is become of my friend Garnier? If he is in London, pray my love to him: we could wish to meet him in Italy; I fear that he will set out next spring, and then we shall not see him, as our intentions are to go through Germany from Venice, and so by Brussels, and not return to Paris. Pray let me know his motions. What is become of your Terence? I have not yet written a word of the fourth or fifth acts of "The Clandestine Marriage," but I am thinking much about it. We are made so much of, as Mr. Cadwallader says, by your dukes and earls, and barons and baronets, that I have not a moment for thinking. Churchill's affair makes me unhappy. What are you doing with Wilkes? Is he not undone? or will they go *too far*, and give him once again the advantage? and what will he do with it when he has it? My heart overflows to Schomberg, Townley, and Hubert.

And I am,

Ever and most affectionately,

Thine, my dear friend,

D. Garrick."

P. S.—"I have, in my hurry, forgot this blank side, but you can make it out. My wife and I desire you will present our respects to Lord Bath. I do assure you, if 'the

Deuce was in him,' I should not be so easy with the flirtation that his Lordship sends, and Mrs. Garrick receives so warmly. However, I am in a country that will teach me how to secure my honour, under lock and key, and I hope to return to England, with less apprehensions of his Lordship. My best wishes to Mr. Burney. I shall write soon to him."

This long and entertaining epistle, seems to require and to deserve a running commentary. We will commence with Gabrielli, who possessed most surprising talents. Her wonderful execution and volubility of voice was long the admiration of Italy; Brydone, speaking of her in 1773, describes her as the most dangerous syren of modern times, and one who had made more conquests than any woman breathing. Her powers in acting and reciting were scarcely inferior to those of her singing, and she is said to have owed much of her merit to the instructions she received from Metastasio. When in good humour, and she chose in earnest to exert herself, nothing that Brydone had heard was in any way to be compared with her performance, for she sang to the heart as well as to the fancy, and commanded every passion with unbounded sway: but she was seldom capable of exercising these astonishing powers. Her stubborn caprice, and her predominant talents, gave her, all her life, the singular fate of becoming alternately an object of admiration and contempt. She was very rich, from the prodigal munificence of the Emperor Francis the First, who was mightily fond of having her at Vienna; but she was at last banished

thence, as she had been from most cities in Italy, in consequenoe of the *brouilleries* which her intriguing temper, perhaps more than her beauty, had excited. Neither interest, flattery, threats, nor punishment, had the least power over her caprice, and the treating her with respect or contempt had an equal tendency to increase it. Many attempts were made to engage her for the opera in England, but without effect, from her want of resolution; the reason being, as she stated, that she could not command her caprice; that it for the most part governed her, and in England there was no opportunity of indulging in it. "For," said she, "were I to take it in my head not to sing, I am told the people there would certainly mob me, and perhaps break my bones; now I like to sleep in a sound skin, although it should even be in a prison!" She alleged, too, that it was not always caprice that prevented her singing, but that it often depended upon physical causes.

Garrick, while in raptures with the public buildings of Rome, makes a ludicrous comparison to Broughton's amphitheatre; Broughton was the celebrated prize-fighter of the day.

The Lord Spencer alluded to, as being at Rome at this period, was John Viscount Spencer, afterwards first Earl Spencer, great grandson of the Duke of Marlborough, and grandfather of the present Earl Spencer. He married Margaret Georgiana, daughter of Stephen Poyntz, Esq., December 27, 1755, and had issue, the late George John, Earl of Spencer, Lady Besborough, and Georgiana, Duchess of

Devonshire. Lady Hervey, in a letter dated January 17, 1756, writes :—" One has heard of nothing for some time past but the magnificence, or rather the silly vain profusion, on account of Mr. Spencer's wedding ; and what is the most extraordinary is, that it was quite disagreeable to both the young couple, and entirely the effect of the vanity and folly of a daughter of Lord Granville, I mean Lady Cowper, Mr. Spencer's mother. They both came to town from Althorp, where they were married, with three coaches and six horses, and two hundred horsemen : the villages through which they passed were put into the greatest consternation ; some of the poor people shut themselves up in their houses and cottages, barricading the doors and windows as well as they could. Those who were resolute, or more desperate, armed themselves with pitchforks, spits, and spades, all crying out it was the *invasion* which was come ; and to be sure, by the coaches and six horses, both the Pretender and the King of France were come too ! In short, great was the alarm, and happy they were, when this formidable cavalcade passed by, without setting fire to the habitations, or murdering the inhabitants."

Lady Cowper, Mr. Spencer's mother, was Lady Georgiana Carteret, daughter of Lord Granville ; and after Mr. Spencer's death, re-married with Lord Cowper, and died in 1780.

The Miss Plym, who is mentioned by Garrick, made her first appearance on any stage, at Drury Lane, as Viola, in Shakspeare's " Twelfth Night," October 19, 1763. King, in the farce of " The Deuce

is in Him," played Prattle; Miss Plym, Mademoiselle Florival; O'Bryen, Colonel Tamper; and Miss Pope, Emily.

The alterations in the "Midsummer Night's Dream" had been made by Colman, and the allusion to the abuse of the "Grown Gentlemen and Ladies," has reference to an essay by him.

Garrick appears to have regretted that he could not induce Mrs. Cibber to re-appear on the boards of Drury Lane, but as she was now nearly fifty years of age, perhaps she was prudent. Mrs. Cibber was the sister of the celebrated Dr. Arne, the composer. She was born in 1715, and married Theophilus Cibber in 1735: she played at Covent Garden till 1747, when Garrick became patentee of Drury Lane, and she and Mrs. Pritchard enlisted into his dramatic corps. In the great contest of the two theatres, respecting the performance of "Romeo and Juliet," Barry had the advantage over Garrick; but Mrs. Cibber's superiority to Miss Nossiter as Juliet, caused a concession to be made by the Covent Garden champions. She died at her house, in Scotland Yard, Westminster, on Thursday, January 30, 1766; "leaving," says Dr. Johnson, "a greater reputation than she deserved, as she had a great sameness, though her expression was undoubtedly very fine. Mrs. Pritchard," adds the Doctor, "was a very good player, but she had something affected in her manner; I imagine she had some player of the former age in her eye, which occasioned it."

"The Dupe" a comedy by Mrs. Frances Sheridan, was produced in 1764, and condemned, on account of some passages which the audience thought too indelicate. The new entertainment was a spectacle, entitled "The Fairy Tale."

The David alluded to was Garrick's nephew, and Castelfranc appears to have been a servant engaged by Garrick for his continental tour.

Hubert was a common friend and visitor in Garrick's family, and a letter to Quin, dated June 20, 1763, described him as "at present, chief favourite and first gallant, at Hampton, with Mrs. Garrick."

Churchill, in a letter written immediately before Garrick's setting out for the continent, notices particularly, Garnier's decease. "Poor Garnier! I much lament that such men should die." Churchill was misinformed, as will appear by a subsequent letter from Garrick.

CHAPTER IV.

1764.

Garrick at Rome—The Pope in a Storm—Delane—Sterne—Colman in Paris—The Earl of Bath—Miss Ford—George the Younger—Edward, Duke of York—Garrick at Venice—Death of Lord Bath—Lady Hervey—Lord Bath's reasons for accepting a Peerage—Sir Robert Walpole—The Duke of Argyle—General Pulteney—Death of the Duke of Devonshire, and of Hogarth—Garrick in Paris—Death of Churchill.

GARRICK would seem to have soon after returned to the 'immortal city' of Rome. In a letter from thence, he explains, "I scarce know, my Lord, what sensation to call it, but I felt a strange unusual something at entering the very city where the great Roscius exerted those talents which rendered him the wonder of his own age, and of which I fear the living actors convey but a faint idea to ours."*

A letter from Colman, in answer to that of Garrick addressed from Naples, on the eve of Christmas-day, induced the following reply:

* The London Chronicle, January 28, 1764.

"My Dear Colman, Rome, April 11, 1764.

"Though I resolved, in my last letter to George, not to trouble you any more till I got to Venice, yet I cannot hold it out so long, but must say a word or two more to you from this place, which, of all places in the world, is the most worth coming to, and writing about. To show you that I think so, you must know that I am antiquity-hunting from morning till night, and my poor wife drags her lame leg after me. By the bye, she is now much better, and we have hopes of her being able to run away again from me, if she can meet with another Captain Caswell. She desires her love to you, and thanks you for writing to me, as I am sure to be always in spirits for some time after the receipt of a letter from you.

"I have not been quite so well here as at Naples, which is rather extraordinary. Whether I fatigued myself too much, or whether the climate does not suit me so well, I can't say, but I have had some disagreeable nervous flutterings that made me as grave as an owl for a few days, but since the rains have fallen—and they came down here in pailfulls—and the sun is bright upon us, I have been as frisky as the poor flies, who were woefully damped by the wet weather, but are now as troublesome and as pert as your humble servant. His Holiness the Pope is trying, by prayers, tears, and intercessions, to avert the famine with which his State is threatened. He has crept up the Holy Stairs (Santa Scala), which were brought from Jerusalem, has ordered processions, and what not.

"We are not so bad as they are at Naples; for there, indeed, the tragedy was deep. I remember some scenes with horror, and since we came away many people have dropped down in the street, and been taken away dead, from mere want of food. Our prospect at Venice is rather worse, for we hear that the plague has spread as far as Trieste, and that they begin to talk of quarantine in the neighbouring States; if so, we shall run the gauntlet

terribly; but we are not dismayed, and must go through with it.

"I must thank you again for the trouble and care you have had about Count Firmian's books. He is very happy at the execution of the commission, and was highly pleased with your sending your own matters to him gratis: it pleased me much. I have not seen a St. James's Chronicle since the end of January. If I have them, I wish you would desire George to keep them for me to rummage over when I come to England. Mr. Baldwin, I hear, is no friend to our house.*

"*A propos*, I am very angry with Powell for playing that detestable part of Alexander. Every genius must despise it, because that, and such fustian-like stuff, is the bane of true merit. If a man can act it well, I mean to please the people, he has something in him that a good actor should not have. He might have served Mrs. Pritchard, and himself too, in some good natural character. I hate your roarers. Delane was once a fine Alexander—damn the part! I fear it will hurt him; but this among ourselves.

"I was told by a gentleman who has just come from Sterne, that he is in a very bad way. I hope Becket has stood my friend in regard to what he ought to have received for me some time ago. I had a draught upon

* Henry Baldwin, as a printer, was one of the old school, bred under Mr. Justice Ackers, of Clerkenwell, the original printer of The London Magazine. He commenced business for himself under the most promising auspices, first in Whitefriars, then in Fleet Street, and finally in Bridge Street, Blackfriars, in a house built expressly for him, now the office of The Standard newspaper. Connected with a phalanx of wits, Bonnel Thornton, Garrick, Colman, Stevens, and others, he started the St. James's Chronicle, on the foundation of a smaller paper of nearly the same name, and had the satisfaction of conducting it to a height of eminence unexampled by any preceding journal. He died at Richmond, February 21, 1813.

him, from Sterne, for twenty pounds, ever since he went abroad; pray hint this to him, but let him not be ungentle with Sterne.

"I have sent the plan of a fine scene, and coloured, among some small things in a little box of Mr. Stanley, of the Custom-house. It is in several parts, and wrote upon the back, which is first, second, &c. I will send a further explanation of it; but any Italian, and our Saunderson will understand it. They should go upon it directly, it will have a fine effect.

"Many thanks to you for your attendance on the Pantomime; I am sure they wanted help: no more humour than brickbats. I am afraid that Love, in humorous matters, carries too much gut to be spirited. Flip-flaps, and great changes without meaning, may distil from the head whose eyes are half asleep; but humour, my dear Coley, and scenes, that shall be all alive, alive ho! can only proceed from men of small stature, whose eyes are either quice asleep, or quite awake; in short, from men who laugh heartily, and have small scars at the ends of their noses.

"I am surprised about Murphy, and want to know how he got off from Mr. Lacy. Poor Lloyd! and yet I was prepared. The death of any one we like does not shock us so much when we have seen them long in a lingering decay. Where is the bold Churchill?—what a noble ruin! When he is quite undone, you shall send him here, and he shall be shown among the great fragments of Roman genius.—Magnificent in ruin!

"Voltaire, in his additions *à l'Histoire Générale*, at page 183, under *Usages du Seizième Siècle*, says something about translating Plautus into verse; that will be of use in your preface to Terence.

"Speed your plough, my dear friend; have you thought of 'The Clandestine Marriage?' I am at it.

"I must desire you to write to me once more, and direct a Mousieur, Monsieur Garrick, Gentilhomme Anglais, chez

Monsieur Dutens, à Turin, and I shall get it by hook, or by crook.

"Pray send me all kind of news: a letter from you will comfort me in bad roads, and through plague and famine; so write, I beg, as soon as you receive this. My love to all the Schombergs, Townleys, Kings, Hogarths, Churchills, Huberts, &c.

"Remember me kindly at home."

The weather, this season, at Rome, appears to have been unusually boisterous and rainy. A ludicrous account of the Pope's being overtaken in a shower, is detailed in a letter from thence, dated July 14. "About three days ago, the Pope, his Life Guards, and other attendants, made a grand procession to St. Peter's, but unfortunately, on their return, such a storm of wind, rain, thunder, and lightning arose, that it put the Pope's guards in a fright: they who were on horseback, rode away as fast as they could, and they who had no horses, ran for it as fast as their legs would carry them. The Pope had six horses to his carriage: the postilions cut the harness of the first four horses, and joined the rest of the party, leaving, like most undutiful children, their most Holy Father, with no other attendants than the coachman and two horses to draw the carriage, which is larger than our King's state coach. A man on horseback who supported a fine golden cross before the Pope, endeavouring to make a precipitate retreat, was thrown down, horse and all, but recovered with no damage but his fears, and the mortification of beholding some contusions on his cross. The Romans are much chagrined at

this circumstance, and say that it affords matter of great satisfaction to the heretics."

Tom Davies records, that Delane's "Alexander the Great," was his most admired and followed character; and his success in that part, brought him from Goodman's Fields to the more critical audience of Covent Garden."

Sterne's autograph letter, soliciting the loan from Garrick, mentioned in the foregoing letter, when proceeding on his "Sentimental Journey," is brief, but to the purpose:—

"Dear Garrick,

"Upon reviewing my finances, this morning, with some unforeseen expenses, I find I should set out with twenty pounds less than a prudent man ought. Will you lend me twenty pounds?

Yours

L. Sterne."

Mrs. Pritchard, for her benefit, on Tuesday, March 20, treated the public, with "not acted for these twenty years," the Rival Queens; Alexander, Powell; Clytus, Love; and Roxana, Mrs. Pritchard. Powell's excellence in the part rendered this piece highly attractive on several repetitions.

Mr. Love was the *getter up*, in a theatrical phrase, of the Pantomimes of Drury Lane Theatre. "But humour, my dear Coley," &c. is a complimentary allusion to Colman, in fact, *ad hominem et ad nasum.*

The mention of Murphy is conjectured to have been in connection with one of the severest letters he ever wrote to Garrick, in which he charges him

with the black character of Tiberius, in storing up resentments for occasional use; the quarrel appears to have originated in a pecuniary matter.*

Garrick had read in the Public Advertiser, October 29, 1763, that "Late on Thursday night, the corpse of the late Mr. Lloyd, was carried from his *only* late dwelling house, in Crown Street, Westminster, and interred in the new vault in St. Margaret's Church," and supposed it had been Robert Lloyd, the intimate and associate of Churchill, Colman, and Bonnel Thornton, but the conjecture was erroneous. The poet survived till December.

Colman, in May, went to Paris for the recovery of his health, and resided at the Hotel de Modene, Rue de Jacob, in the Fauxbourg St. Germains. The ensuing letter, possibly the last he received from the Earl of Bath, appears to express uneasiness of Colman's illness, and a regret that he had not accompanied the Earl to Shrewsbury.

"Dear Coley, Shrewsbury, May 21, 1764.

"I thank you for your letter, and the enclosed poem [The Candidate] in it, which is in my opinion the severest, and the best of all Churchill's works. He has a great genius, and is an excellent poet; there are, to be sure, some as fine lines as ever were written, and some as low prosaic trash as ever came from Grub-street.† One may plainly see that

* See Garrick Correspondence.

† Dr. John Brown, in a letter to Garrick, November 1762, affords a similar character of this writer, "I do not like your friend Churchill's third book. To talk in the grand epic style, it has neither beginning, middle, nor end; it is crammed with personal abuse, and that too thrown on people who did not deserve

all his works are what the French call *pièces rapporté*. He has always a vast number of loose verses lying by him, which he can bring into any poem, that he wants to enlarge to the price of half-a-crown, and so sticks them in, as he wants them. I cannot, however, in the main, approve of such abominable abuse. You know I never was famous for great partiality to Ministers, I am acquainted with very few who are at present such, and I never would be one myself, though often offered it. From these considerations you may be sure that it is not any fondness of mine for great men that makes me dislike this poem, but really it is so scandalously abusive and scurrilous that no one who has the least decency can approve such Billingsgate stuff, 'running *a muck*,' as Pope calls it, at once upon all mankind.* I wish you had come down with us instead of Peele, but our whist party would have been spoiled by Remend's illness; he has been in some danger from a violent fever. On Monday next we remove from hence, and go to Wolverhampton.

I am yours,

BATH."

it, for aught that appears. It is obscure; here and there a good line, but many of the mediocre rank in my opinion. In short, he will scribble himself down, in spite of genius.

* Pope uses this phrase in the couplet:—

'Satire 's my weapon, but I 'm too discreet,
To run a muck, and tilt at all I meet.'

To '*run a muck*' has long been a common expression amongst sailors, but Dr. Johnson was at a loss to discover the derivation of the term. Among the Malayans, an almost unconquerable spirit of gaming characterises all grades, and having lost their stake or property, the luckless gamesters, in despair, loosen a certain lock of hair, indicating destruction to all they meet. Intoxicated with opium, they sally forth, in maddened frenzy, biting or killing any one or every person who may fall in their way, and employing on those occasions a *muck* or lance. But so soon as the murderous lock is seen flowing, it is lawful for any

The foregoing letter from Lord Bath was received in Colman's absence, by Miss Ford, who opened it, and on the blank page wrote the following, re-sealed it, and addressed it to Colman at Paris :

" Thursday (May 24), 3 o'clock.

" I have just drank my dear Coley's health in a glass of port, alone in the bedchamber. This letter came last night, and as I thought it would make you happy, I have sent it by to-night's post. I am just going to the play with Mrs. Jewell and Mrs. Beard.* Milley (Miss Mills) told Powell that she thought it was very unkind that Mrs. Powell had never been to see me since you left me—I think it has done good. So I imagine that by your writing to them it will be of great service, as they think you have much interest with Garrick, and you know there is nothing to be done without it. Poor George (Garrick) was in great fright that you were gone to meet his brother ; I could hardly make him believe to the contrary. Your dear little boy† has been

one to shoot at or destroy the madmen with all possible dispatch. This would form a tolerable ground-work for some of the writers of our modern melo-dramas—and the title too, in the play bill, would be striking—RUN A MUCK !

Dryden has also an allusion to the practice :—

' Frontless and satire-proof, he scares the streets,
And runs an Indian muck at all he meets !'

* To Covent Garden Theatre, when Hull played for the first time Loveless, in " Love's Last Shift," and the " Intriguing Chambermaid," for the benefit of Evans and Green, box-keepers.

† The " dear little boy " was George Colman the Younger, of whom much more will hereafter be detailed.

Mrs. Mills and Mrs. Bellamy were actresses belonging to Garrick and Lacy's company. The very bad benefit on the preceding night was at Drury Lane Theatre, " For the Fairies in the Fairy Tale," one of whom was Miss Ford's daughter by her previous *liaison* with Mossop. The play was the " Rival Queens ;" Alexander, Powell ; Roxana, Mrs. Pritchard ; and the " Fairy Tale "

very ill, but is now much better. Milley and Bell (Mrs. George Ann Bellamy) send their respects.

" I am afraid I shall be late, and therefore dare say no more, but that there was a very bad benefit last night.

" My compliments to Mrs. H (ubert ?) Pray write soon, and to Powell. God bless you, and send you home in good health and spirits, and be assured I shall ever be sincerely yours, S. F."

Colman wrote an epilogue to the " Fairy Tale," which was spoken by Hopkins the prompter's daughter, then not five years old (afterwards the wife of John Kemble), in the character of the " Fairy Page." *

Garrick's visit to Italy was this year rendered doubly interesting to him, by the presence of the King's brother, Edward Duke of York, who was then visiting the Italian States, and was, as the Earl of Ulster, received by them amid spectacles of extraordinary magnificence and splendour. The Duke's fondness for music and theatric pomp was indulged by a display of all that the Continental cities could proffer. Garrick followed his movements, and participated in these pleasures ; personally known to the Duke, he was at the same time the associate of Earl Spencer and Lord Palmerston, and other distinguished English nobles there, and his own eminence as the English Roscius, led to his invitation to almost every entertainment which was instigated by the Duke's presence. Garrick, in his letter of April 11th, does not mention him ; but the Duke was then there, and on his departure thence,

* It was included in Colman's collected Works.

on Tuesday, April 28th, presented forty sequins to Giovanni, the celebrated performer on the violoncello, accompanied by an invitation to visit England, but which, on account of his advanced age, that distinguished musician declined.

The Duke reached Bologna, on May 5th, and arrived at Parma on the 9th. In a letter to Colman, dated from Venice, Garrick says, "I called at Parma on my way hither, and was introduced to the Duke when he dined with the Duke of York; he speaks English well, and understands it better. He has read Shakspeare, and was very desirous to hear our manner of speaking, which desire he shewed with so much feeling and delicacy that I readily consented, in the presence of the Duke of York, Lord Spencer, and the first Minister. He was greatly pleased, and the next morning sent me a very handsome gold box, with some of the finest enamelled painting upon all sides of it, I ever saw. He likewise ordered apartments for me, and sent me from his court, more conceited by half, than I came to it."

Lord and Lady Spencer, Lord Palmerston, and other distinguished English personages, are notified as having come to Venice on May 23rd, and on the 26th the arrival of the Duke of York was announced. That Garrick was busied in these movements is sufficiently evident, by a letter from the Adriatic capital, dated May 29th, in which he says, "Poor Mrs. Garrick is in an indifferent state of health. She got a *sciatica* at Naples, and cannot walk without support, yet she will set out for Germany with

her husband, as soon as the public rejoicings are over."

Garrick was too much occupied by these raree-shows, and the ill health of himself and spouse, to have much leisure for corresponding with his friends in England. His letter to Colman, on his leaving the grand *scena* of excitement, is however highly interesting.

"DEAR COLMAN, Venice, July 12, 1764.

"I SHALL leave this place to-morrow, and return to Padua, in order to be near the famous mud of Abano, which the physicians here tell us, will certainly restore Mrs. Garrick. She is not worse, but she continues lame, and the continuance is very alarming I fret to be at home, I dread the Italian suns, and I am afraid, that my presence is necessary to make a plan for the next winter. If I can be at home a month before the opening of the house, I shall think that I have done wonders. I shall try all my might to compass it. This Venice is the most particular place in the whole world; it glares upon you at first, and enchants you, but living a month here (like the honey-moon) brings you to a temperate consideration of things, and you long for your *terra firma* liberty again. I am tired to death, though I have seen such sights here, as I had no conception of, but in fairy land, and have seen the visions of the Arabian Nights realized by the Venetian regate.* This show was given on the 4th of this month, in honour of our King, and to entertain the Duke. I shall be a week in telling you all I saw and felt on that day: such elegant luxury! which plainly shewed that the contrivers were as little formidable in war and politics, as they were superior to all the world as

* *The Regatta.*—For ample details of this truly magnificent spectacle, see The London Gazette, of June 25th, in a letter from Venice.

managers of a puppet-show. I have taken my evening walks of meditation on the Rialto, and have fancied myself waiting for my friend Pierre; but the whole idea has vanished at the sight of a Venetian noble, who can give you no idea, in look or in dress, but that of an apparitor to a spiritual court in the country; but then their Courts of Justice! and their lawyers! If there is any thing more particularly ridiculous than another, it is one of their pleadings. It was some minutes before I recovered my senses, and when I found I was really awake, and in a Court of Justice, I was ready to burst with laughter. It is inconceivably strange, and more whimsical and *outré* than the Italian Theatre; and yet all sober people agree, that their decrees are generally just and impartial.

"I have been buying pictures and books, and am scarce able to hold my pen with fatigue. I have no joy now in thinking on the stage, and I shall return (if I must) like a bear to the stake: and this baiting, my good friend, is no joke after forty.

"Pray tell George, that I hope he has written me a long letter to Augsburg, with a full account of what business is ready for the campaign. I have been thinking of it seriously. I am in treaty with a fine dancer, and hope to succeed, at Padua.* Pray write me a letter, and send me word what people really say about me, and what you think of our affairs.

"I have received an obliging letter from Powell,† his playing himself to rags astonishes me! What can be the

* Garrick's attempts to engage dancers, were known at home; and it was stated that a large train of effeminate exotics would be brought over with him.

† Powell in the letter alluded to, dated March 30th, with much gratitude, asserts, "During my poor but best endeavours in the duty of my new profession, I am indebted to Mr. Colman for every assistance; his friendship can be equalled by none but that which I have experienced from you."

meaning of it? Damn Alexander! O horrible, horrible! Delane got credit by that stuff; damn it! I say again.

"I believe, after all, that you had better write to me, at Calais, some time after you receive this. After that sweating, tedious journey, a long letter from you will be consolation indeed. Let George write too. I hope the great scene which Saunderson was preparing, is getting ready. I have received George's last. God bless you."

Garrick, with most of the English residents, appears, in all these transactions, to have preceded the Duke of York by some days. If he really quitted Venice on the 13th, the Duke did not leave till the 16th, and arrived the same day at Padua, where he witnessed the gorgeous festival of the *Corpus Domini.** At day-break, July 4, the Duke left Padua to visit Turin, and thence visited the Court of Berlin. This accounts for Garrick's desiring Colman to direct his letter to Turin; but his anxieties, and fears of ill heath, induced him to waver his resolves, and Colman, on July 24, announced that "David Garrick and his lady were expected in town, from abroad, at the beginning of the following month."

The Earl of Bath, on whom Colman relied for a provision, died somewhat suddenly, about ten at night, on Saturday, July 7, and on the following day, the body was embalmed, agreeably to the directions in his will. In the St. James's Chronicle, on the 10th, it was stated, that "by the death of Lord Bath, an annuity of nine hundred guineas per annum, devolved

* The particulars of this festival will be found in the London Gazette, July 23, 1764.

to George Colman, Esq. of Lincoln's Inn." The same newspaper intimated that "his Lordship, among other legacies, has bequeathed a ring and a pair of diamond ear-rings to Mrs. Montagu, wife to Edward Montagu, Esq. M.P. for Huntingdon.

Lady Hervey, the widow of John Lord Hervey, in a letter to the Rev. Edmund Morris, dated July 14th, thus speaks of his decease: "I am really sorry for the death of poor Lord Bath, who, though of a great age, might have lived much longer. He had his understanding as perfect as ever, enjoying company, and partly contributing to the enjoyment. He threw away his life by a needless piece of complaisance, in drinking tea out of doors, after being warmed and heated by a great deal of meat, a great deal of company, and a good deal of mirth at dinner. He was not at an age, nor is ours a climate, for those *al frescos:* it was thoughtless in those who proposed it, and weakly complaisant in him who complied with it. From various circumstances, I have seen him but seldom for many years past, but whenever we did meet, he was always the same, and ever cheerful, and good company. He was to me, like a sum in a bank, of which, though I made but little immediate use, I could always be sure of having my draft answered."

The Earl's body was deposited, on the night of Wednesday, July 18, in the same vault with his Countess and their only son, Lord Viscount Pulteney, in Abbot Islip's Chapel, in Westminster

Abbey. On the 20th of the same month, Lady Hervey thus expresses herself more in detail respecting the Earl's disposition of his property :—

"Lord Bath's leaving me no little bauble in token of remembrance, did not surprise, and consequently did not vex me. He was a most agreeable companion, and a very good-humoured man; but I, who have known him above forty years, knew that he never thought of any one when he did not see them, nor ever cared a great deal for those he did see. I am sorry he did not leave poor Johnstone wherewithal to make her easy, as she was not only a near relation, who wanted his kindness, but the daughter of a man to whom he had essential obligations, and professed to love. He has left an immense fortune to a brother he never cared for, and always with reason despised; and a great deal to a man he once liked, but had lately great reason to think ill of. I am sorry he is dead; he was very agreeable and entertaining, and whenever I was well enough to go down stairs, and give him a good dinner, he was always ready to come, and give me his good company in return. I was satisfied with that; one must take people as they are, perhaps hardly any are, in every respect, just what they should be."

To the reader in English history, and in times no further back than the reigns of Queen Anne, George the First, and Second, the character of William Pulteney must be familiar. Of his oratory, his

political acrimony, his playful occasional poetry, his pleasantry in conversation, and his domestic qualities, (in which last there appears to have been a mixture of affection, generosity, and avarice,) every body who reads, has read and still may read.

Among all the obloquy heaped upon William Pulteney on his loss of popularity, through his acceptance of a peerage, (his reasons for which acceptance are given in the following pages,) nothing perhaps galled him more than the odes of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams. Satire can laugh while it kills reputation; and the death-wounds of ridicule inflict a double-torture.

The subjoined explanation of his motives for quitting the House of Commons, and accepting an earldom, is a curiosity. It was found among the posthumous papers of George Colman the Elder, by his son, and the manuscript is in the handwriting of the former :—

" On Wednesday, October 4th, 1756, I overheard the following conversation between Lord Bath and Mr. Hooke, author of the Roman history, in the parlour at Isleworth. When I came into the room, I found that they were conversing on the subject of his lordship's quitting the House of Commons. As this was a subject on which I had never heard Lord Bath ever utter a single syllable before, I listened with great attention, and I believe that I remember most of what was said, nearly in the very words, but am sure that I have not made the least addition, or any alteration in the circumstances.

" Upon my first entrance into the room, Lord

Bath was just closing an account of a conversation between himself and the King, by which it appeared that the partisans in the opposition had had some differences among themselves. Upon this occasion His Majesty made use of these words to Lord Bath. 'As soon as I found you were at variance among yourselves, I saw that I had *two shops to deal with*, and I rather chose to come to you, because I knew that your aim was only directed against my minister, but I did not know but the Duke of Argyle wanted to be king himself.' These words, it was agreed, both by Lord Bath and Mr. Hooke, were suggested to His Majesty by Sir Robert Walpole.

"Mr. Hooke then said, that he had always looked upon his lordship's conduct in that affair as a mystery, and so did most other people, who cried, 'It is strange that Will. Pulteney should be taken off by a peerage, when we all know that he might have had one whenever he would, for many years before.' But that he had conversed with some of his lordship's friends, who, though they also looked on his conduct as a mystery, still believed that he had good and honest reasons for what he did.

"His lordship replied that he certainly had; that there were several curious anecdotes relating to that affair, and some particulars known to no soul living except the King and himself; that he had never made any minutes of those transactions, but that he could easily recollect all the principal circumstances; which he would at times endeavour to do, in hopes that Mr. Hooke, as he had a fine pen, would, if he survived his lordship, work up those materials into

a sort of history of this affair; that this he was desirous of having done for the sake of truth, and therefore could wish that these particulars might be made public, while some of the parties concerned were yet living, and unable to deny their authenticity; that a regard to truth, and the furnishing materials for genuine history was his chief motive, for that, as to his own character, conscious of his integrity, he had never said so much as he had now mentioned to any one before, or taken the least pains to vindicate himself. He then told the following story:—When it appeared that Lord Bath, then Mr. Pulteney, was at the head of the House of Commons, that no supplies could be raised, no business carried on, and that Sir Robert Walpole was in imminent danger, Mr. Pulteney received a letter from the Duke of Newcastle, signifying that 'his Grace had a message to deliver to him from the King, and desired that Mr. Pulteney would meet him (appointing that or some other particular evening) at eight o'clock, at Mr. Stone's, in the Privy Garden.' To this letter Mr. Pulteney returned an answer to this effect: 'that he was very ready to receive any message from the King, but that he absolutely refused to receive any such message by meeting his Grace by stealth, at his under secretary's, in the dark; that if the Duke had anything to say to him from His Majesty, his Grace must come to him at his own house, by daylight, in sight of all his servants. He further desired the Duke not to impute this behaviour to pride, for that it was necessary for a person at the head of a party

to manage his reputation in this manner.' To this the Duke replied to this purpose: 'that he thought Mr. Pulteney was entirely in the right in using so much delicacy and precaution; that he would wait on him at his own house, in the manner he prescribed, accompanied by the Lord Chancellor.' This produced a further answer from Mr. Pulteney, signifying 'that in order to put himself on an equality with his Grace, who proposed bringing the Chancellor, he also thought proper to call in an aid on his side, *viz.* Lord Granville.' In consequence of these letters, the Duke of Newcastle and the Lord Chancellor came together to Mr. Pulteney's, and found him, expecting their arrival, in company with Lord Granville. The Duke of Newcastle then told Mr. Pulteney that he had a message to him from the King, which was to desire 'that Mr. Pulteney would accept of being at the head of the Treasury, and the nomination of those other persons whom he would have put into power; and that as Sir Robert Walpole found it expedient to retire, that Mr. Pulteney would promise to preserve him from persecution.' This was the substance of what was said by the Duke of Newcastle, to which Mr. Pulteney made answer to the following effect: 'That he utterly disclaimed all aiming at power, that he would accept of no places; that what he aimed at was not merely a change of men, but measures also; and that he would never come in to carry on the same system of corruption: that as to promising His Majesty to secure Sir Robert Walpole, he neither would, nor could, make any such promise: that if

his Grace would read Cardinal De Retz, he would find that *a party was like a serpent, that the* TAIL *pushed on the* HEAD ; so that if he promised, he should engage for more than he was able to perform : that, however, he was no blood-thirsty man, that he had no sanguinary views, and that he wished Sir Robert might be able to escape by his innocence, and the rather, because he had once incautiously said in the House of Commons, that *he would pursue Sir Robert to his* DESTRUCTION. This had been considered by many as a very cruel speech, but all he meant by it was the *destruction* of Sir Robert as a minister, not as a man ; he meant a destruction of his power not of his person. But, in short, as to a promise, for the reasons above, he could make none, so that if any such promise was expected, his Grace's treaty with him must here break off before it was begun.' The Duke then complained that he was dry, and some wine being called for, Mr. Pulteney filled out a glass, and told his Grace with a smile, ' that he would drink to him in the words of Brutus :—

" ' If we should meet again, 'tis well,
If not, why then this parting was well made.'

" This story ended, Lord Bath observed that during this conference, and some others on the same occasion, the Lord Chancellor did not say a word ; nor Lord Granville, till he was nominated by him to be put in as Secretary of State. Just at this time dinner came in, and interrupted the conversation. After dinner this

conversation was resumed, and took a different turn, but had more the air of general chat, in the course of which Lord Bath said 'that it was he who nominated Lord Winchelsea to be placed at the head of the Admiralty; a secret which he had never mentioned to any body before, and which Lord Winchelsea himself was not acquainted with to this day, but imagined that he was brought in by Lord Granville. That, after he had brought in Lord Granville, he wrote to his lordship, when abroad with the King in the last war, to inform him that the high favour in which he stood with the King had created many jealousies in the rest of the ministry, who would certainly get him out, if he relied solely on the favour of the King, and did not take care to secure himself by forming proper connections and dependences.' To this letter he received an answer from Lord Granville, telling him 'that he made no doubt of standing his ground by being so high in His Majesty's favour, that he had even shewed Lord Bath's letter to the King, who told him, upon the occasion, that he knew indeed that several little plots were formed against him, but that he would keep his lordship in, in spite of their teeth. In about a fortnight after their return from abroad, he was turned out.

"Among many other particulars which fell from Lord Bath on this occasion, and which, from the confusion and irregularity of the conversation, I cannot well recollect, I particularly remember the following:—'When things began to draw to a crisis, and the parties in the opposition saw them-

selves soon likely to come in, they became at variance with each other concerning who should have the best places. This it was that occasioned that speech of the King's, mentioned in the beginning of this account, and destroyed,' said Lord Bath, ' that glorious scheme which I had laid of bringing about a reconciliation in the royal family on a proper foot, and retiring with honour myself. When I found,' continued he, ' what they were driving at, I went to the Prince of Wales, and first asked him whether the others in the opposition had not been there before me. The Prince frankly owned that they had been with him. I then told him that I found that their views were directed to the securing rich preferments to themselves, but that my sole aim was to reconcile His Royal Highness to the King on a proper foot, and to make him appear in a right light as Prince of Wales. To convince him of this, I only begged to come alone, and confront all the rest in His Royal Highness's presence ; upon which the Prince appointed a meeting at his house in Pall Mall, at eight o'clock that evening. I went accordingly, and found them there before me, *viz.* the Duke of Argyle, Lord Chesterfield, Lord Gower, Lord Cobham, and Lord Bathurst. Each of these spoke in his turn, and I answered each successively. When we had all spoken, the Prince said that he thought Mr. Pulteney acted from the best motives, and delivered it as his resolution that he would go in with him. This was so sore a mortification to the Duke of Argyle, that it is thought to have been the occasion of his death.' "

The comparatively slight provision that had been made for Colman, was the surprise of many. One of his biographers has recorded, that "The Earl left him a very comfortable annuity, but less than was expected, owing, it was said, to some little differences that existed between them, just before the death of that nobleman." * His posthumously printed vindication, however, had not then appeared. In that statement, Colman says, "that Lord Bath, to the day of his death, continued his favour and protection to me. I entered his house as familiarly as my own chambers, and occupied without invitation a place at his table. On his death, his brother, General Pulteney, received me as a friend, and gave me to understand that I was *un enfant de famille* that must not be overlooked or neglected. He told me that he supposed I should no longer think of the profession to which I had been destined, and made me a present of his chariot.

"Such a call *from* the bar was too tempting to be resisted, and I accordingly quitted my tie-wig, gown, and band, and my chambers in Lincoln's Inn. I did not, however, roll long in the General's carriage without some rather disagreeable jolts in it. Malice soon began her operations, and endeavoured to prejudice him against me; yet he continued my friend, and in answer to a letter to him at Tunbridge, he returned me the following comfortable epistle:"

Vox audita perit, litera scripta manet.

* "Gentleman's Magazine," 1794.

"Dear Colman, Tunbridge, Aug. 3, 1764.

"I esteem you very much for your acknowledgment, and grateful sense of poor Lord Bath's affection and kindness to you, which has urged you at present, in writing to me, to express yourself, with the overflowings of an honest heart, in so very obliging a manner, that if I had no other motive, it would be sufficient to make me love you with great cordiality and kindness to my life's end. But I will over and above assure you, that I have ever loved you, and am persuaded, that nothing will alter my affection and opinion of your deserving from me all the good that Lord Bath has visibly designed, and wished you to enjoy. All that can be said further, must be superfluous and unnecessary. Let me add, however, that I shall always be glad of a visit from you: the reason that after the 11th was mentioned to you for coming here, was from an engagement about that time, to the Bishop of Rochester, and would be an hindrance to your being at the same time with me, as my house would be quite full; but as he makes no longer a stay than a day or two, you may then take your own time and conveniency of obliging me with your company; being,

Dear Colman,

Yours very affectionately,

H. Pulteney."

"Nothing could be more open and direct than the contents of this letter, yet some subsequent events, too strange not to be noticed, but yet too minute to be recapitulated, made me conceive it more than barely possible, that the General would, on some pretence, render void his most explicit and voluntary declaration. Under this persuasion, I thought it advisable to secure to myself, if possible, some advantages more solid and permanent than an annuity which was to vanish with my life, and

might render it impossible for me to provide for any survivor."

Garrick, early in August, reached Munich, where he was attacked by an alarming fit of illness. His letter to Arden,* dated thence, September 15th, states, "I have been confined more than a month to my bed by the most dangerous bilious fever that ever poor sinner suffered, for the small fault of a little innocent society." He was then, however, sufficiently recovered to continue his course to Augsburg on the morrow, and had determined to depend on the intelligence he should receive there, or at Stutgard, either to push on for Spa, or make the best of his way to some other waters in France. This illness appears to have incapacitated Garrick from busying himself much about what was passing. Death, in the ensuing month of October, deprived him of two of his most loved associates. The Duke of Devonshire died on the 3rd, at Spa, at half-past nine in the evening; and Hogarth expired suddenly, after being very cheerful at supper, at his house in Leicester Square, on Friday the 26th. These facts, with the length of time since Garrick's last communication, impelled Colman to write, expressing a hope, that so long a silence might not again occur; and Garrick appears to have written after that dated in June, requiring a reply to be addressed to him at Nanci, but which, if it ever reached Colman, is now lost.

* See "The Garrick Correspondence."

Colman appears to have heard of Garrick's illness, and to have reiterated the expressions of anxious solicitude of more persons, who were the great actor's friends as well as his own. The following was Garrick's answer.

" My Dear Colman, Paris, Nov. 10th, 1764.

" I obey your friendly commands, and write by the first post. I have for a long time, I hope it will never be so long again, been impatient for a letter from you. I hope you did not direct any letter to Nanci, as I desired, for I found not one for me there. I could wish that George would enquire if Mr. Beighton of Egham received my letter, and whether he answered it. If he did, that likewise is lost; though in general I have been very lucky in those matters.

" You say that you want to talk with me, and have many, many things to say to me. I do assure you, that I never close my eyes, without believing that I am emptying all my store of friendly prattle into your ears, and receiving yours into mine. Had I been happy enough to have caught you here, my dear friend, I should not have wanted James's Powder, *l'Exercise du Cheval, et beaucoup de dissipation*, as all the French doctors have prescribed, and I have had three of them, which, with three German ones, and two of my own country, make the number, eight! Eight physicians, my good friend, and still alive! and very likely to continue so, so set your honest heart at rest; and perhaps those of my other friends who care about me, may not be wholly insensible at this intelligence.

" I am a little the worse for wear, and was so altered a fortnight ago that I was not known till I spoke; but now, my cheeks are swelling, my belly rounding, and I can pass for a tolerable looking Frenchman; but my nerves, Sir, my nerves, they are agitated at times, and the Duke of

Devonshire's death had very near cracked them. They kept his death from me by the management of the best of women and wives, till I was better able to struggle with such a heart-breaking loss. He loved me to the greatest confidence, and I deserved it by my gratitude, though not by my merits. I must not dwell upon this subject, it shakes me from head to foot. I cannot forget him, and the blow was as dreadful to me, in my weak condition, as it was unexpected. I heard nothing of Hubert and Hogarth, before your letter told me of their death. I was much affected with your news, the loss of so many of my acquaintance, in so short a time, is a melancholy reflection.

" Churchill, I hear, is at the point of death at Boulogne. This may be report only; he is certainly very ill. What a lust of publishing has possessed him for some time past! The greatest genius, no more than the greatest beauty, can withstand such continued prostitution; I am sorry, very sorry for him: such talents, with prudence, had commanded the nation. I have seen some extracts I don't admire.

" What is Brown's book upon Poetry? Pray let me have some literary intelligence. How could Mr. Francklin imagine, that any difference between us would affect any of his dramatic productions? I hope my heart is free from any injustice and malignity of that kind. Mr. Lacy at present manages our theatre. If he receives Mr. Francklin's performance, I wish it success; this paragraph you may read to him if you please. Did you receive my letter about our Comedy? I shall begin, the first moment I find my comic ideas return to me, to divert myself with scribbling; say something to me upon that subject. I have considered our three acts, and with some little alterations they will do; I will ensure them.

" Had Lord Bath behaved to you as he ought, and not suffered himself, at the last, to be flattered by a learned lady and her flatterers, I should *have dropped a tear* too, but my nerves bore the news of his death without agitation.

Madame la Précieuse, I hear since, has been disappointed, and has acted her part for a pair of ear-rings only; I hope 'tis true from my soul.

" I received a very agreeable letter from Powell; I have not answered it yet, but I will. Advise him to study hard; for without it, no reputation, however brilliant at the beginning, can be supported. I have sincere regard for him, and rejoice in his success.

" Your attention to my friend Townley's brat, gives me true pleasure—is the Farce received? George does not mention it. My love to Townley. Is your Terence yet published?

" You wish me in Southampton Street, and so do I wish myself there; but not for acting or managing, but to see you, my dear Colman, and other friends. The doctors, all have forbid me thinking of business. I have at present lost all taste for the stage; it was once my greatest passion, and I laboured for many years like a true lover, but I am grown cold. Should my desires return, I am the town's humble servant again, though she is a great coquette, and I want youth, vigorous youth, to bear up against her occasional capriciousness: but more of this when I see you.

" Foote has been here: I did not see him; did his pieces succeed last summer?

" News, news, news, my dear friend, and in return I will let you know every thing that passes here, and send you my sincere love and best affection into the bargain."

Mr. Beighton, was " the honest vicar of Egham; a generous, modest, ingenuous, and disinterested clergyman," as Garrick described him. Lord Chancellor Camden also spoke of him as " one of the best men that ever Christianity produced!" There are few who would not feel great pride in a commendation from two such individuals, placed in

different situations in life, but both pre-eminent. At his death, he bequeathed to Garrick and Lord Camden, who were his executors, his library, which produced nearly 800*l.* by auction.

Garrick, in a letter to his friend Arden, written from Munich, in September, thus describes himself; "I am most truly the *Knight of the Woeful Countenance*, and have lost legs, arms, belly, cheeks, &c. I have scarce anything left but bones, and a pair of dark lack-lustre eyes, which have retired an inch or two more in their sockets, and wonderfully set off the parchment that covers the cheeks. I recover daily, but invalids will prate of their ailments."

Churchill died at this period: his illness was ascribed by his aspersers (and, naturally, he had an abundant share of them), to his fondness for French wines, but it was really occasioned by a cold, from which he suffered from October the 29th, until his death, which occurred on November the 4th. The Sunday following, at 2 p. m., as soon as his decease was known, the English ships in Boulogne harbour, struck their flags; and on Saturday, November the 10th, the day on which Garrick's letter is dated, his body was landed at Dover, and interred there on the 12th.

A laxity of morals does not appear to have been any drawback to success at that time, as is evident from many of the letters we have inserted; the following letter by Churchill is liable to the same observation. Perhaps in bad taste, we introduce a letter written by Churchill to a friend, on his resignation of all

clerical functions: at any rate, he was "a bold-faced villain."

"DEAR ——, Feb. 1761.

"I have in both respects acted as I told you I would the last time I was at your house. I have got rid of both my causes of complaints; the wife I was tired of, and the gown I was displeased with.

"You have often heard me say, I had no sort of chance of enjoying any ecclesiastical preferment, and that I heartily despised being a pitiful curate. Why then should I breathe in wretchedness and a rusty gown, when my muse can furnish me with felicity and a laced coat?

"Besides, why should I play the hypocrite? Why should I seem contented with my lowly situation, when I am ambitious to aspire, and wish for a much higher? Why should I be called to account by a dull phlegmatic * * * *, for wearing white thread stockings, when I desire to wear white silk ones and a sword? In short, I have looked into myself, I have examined myself attentively, and I have found that I am better qualified to be a gentleman than a poor curate. It has been, therefore, from principle I have shook off the old rusty gown, the p— burnt bob, and the brown beaver, which set so uneasy upon me. I find no qualms of conscience for what I have done, but am much easier in my mind. I feel myself in the situation of a man that has carried a d—n'd heavy load for a long time, and then sets it down. So much for my wife and gown.

"I shall be at the Shakspeare to-morrow night, and shall be glad to see you there; and believe me to be, dear ——, what I really am, and shall always continue,

Yours, &c.

C. CHURCHILL."

Mrs. Carter, after her return from Spa, writes thus,

in one of her letters to Mrs. Talbot, "I have lately heard that Churchill, within two years, has got 3,500*l.* by his ribald scribbling! Happy age of virtue and of genius, in which Wilkes is a patriot, and Churchill a poet!"

Churchill became connected with Wilkes in the notorious "North Briton;" and when the resentment of the Government was excited by the never-to-be-forgotten No. 45, it appeared, in evidence before the Privy Council, that Churchill received the profits of the sale; orders were consequently issued for the arrest of Churchill. Southey * gives the following account of a scene, and an ingenious *ruse* on the part of Wilkes, whilst he himself was in the custody of the King's Messenger, which saved his friend. When Churchill, ignorant of what had taken place, entered the room, "Good morning, Mr. Thompson," said Wilkes to him, "how does Mrs. Thompson do? Does she dine in the country?"—Churchill received the hint as readily as it had been given, made a suitable reply, and almost directly took his leave; hurried home, secured his papers, retired into the country, and eluded all search. Southey adds, that this anecdote is related by Wilkes himself, in a letter to the Duke of Grafton.

It has been stated, that the year after his death, a volume of sermons was published, which he had prepared for the press; but this seems improbable. They bear no marks of his composition;

* Life of Cowper.

and it has been conjectured that they were some of his father's, which he had copied for his own use. Southey adds (and he is excellent authority), "that Churchill was no hypocrite," consequently he would not have published sermons for a serious purpose, nor could he in after-life have been tempted by necessity to avail himself of public curiosity.

In the course of Garrick's last letter, he alludes to the Rev. Thomas Francklin, patronised in early life by the Earl of Bath, and the translator of Sophocles and Lucian. He had some difference of opinion with Garrick, which appears to have originated in a few unguarded words relative to Dr. Brown's tragedy of "Barbarossa." The effect of these remarks yet rankled in the heart of the manager and actor. Garrick's wish for the success of Francklin's drama was verified; it was his play of the Earl of Warwick, in which Mrs. Yates's performance conferred great reputation. The line "about *our* comedy" refers to the afterwards renowned Clandestine Marriage.

The "learned lady" and "Madame La Precieuse," must have been the celebrated *bas-blue*, Mrs. Montagu, and her friend and flatterer, Mrs. Carter. Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, the translatress of Epictetus, was generally distinguished by Archbishop Sherlock and his family, as *Madame* Carter, and Garrick's knowledge of the old Earl of Bath's flirtations with her might have suggested the cognomen.

Townley was the head master of Merchant Tailors' school, and the author of High Life Below Stairs, one of the best farces on the English stage,

and two other pieces,—that in question must have been the Tutor, produced 1765, and acted only two nights.

Powell's letter to Garrick, of March 30th, remained unanswered till December 12th, when Garrick's reply was replete with sincere advice, to study hard, and at leisure to read other books besides plays, in which he was concerned.

"Our friend Colman," he continues, "will direct you in these matters, and as he loves, and is a good judge of acting, consult him as often as you can upon your theatrical affairs." He conjured him never to let Shakspeare be out of his hands, or his pockets; but to keep him about him as a charm; to guard against splitting the ears of the groundlings, and concludes with "I shall leave the rest to the friendship of Colman, and your own genius.*"

* See the Garrick Correspondence.

CHAPTER V.

1765.

Sir H. W. Dashwood—The Sieur Monnet—Puffing in 1765—The Flibbleriad — Hardham's 37 — Baron d'Holbach — De Belloy — Garrick's Puffs — Wilkes at Bologna — Death of Robert Lloyd—Colman's Terence—Bonnell Thornton—Rev. R. Shepherd—Clandestine Marriage—Dispute with Garrick—George Colman the Younger's Evidence as to the Authorship of "The Clandestine Marriage."

THE worthy Baronet, mentioned in the following letter, was Sir Henry W. Dashwood, and the passage relates to some pecuniary accommodations in bill transactions, for which Colman had become answerable.

"MY DEAR COLMAN, Paris, Jan. 23, 1765.

"I think your affair with the worthy baronet a sufficient excuse for your not answering my last letter sooner. I forgive you with all my soul, and only wish that with all my soul I could be of the least assistance to you. You may, and must command me upon all occasions. D—— all such treacherous villains! I did not lose a moment to enquire after his worthiness. He is spending away as if he had the Duke of Devonshire's estate, and has made a more brilliant and fantastical, and in his case profligate, figure

than any of his countrymen. He was last Sunday at the Ambassador's. I went directly to our good friend Mons. de Beaumont,* and asked him if it was not possible to do something in your affair here. He thinks you should lose no time in sending over your security and papers to him, if you cannot conveniently come yourself. I don't know whether you would not have a better chance to manage him here than in England or Ireland; and if he has money you should try all you can to get it. I know my banker would not trust him; but he has money, and spends it like a fool. Don't lose a moment—the matter is of great consequence. I would really let all other affairs give way to this. Two thousand pounds is no small object. Do you think my plaguing him would be of service? If it would, I'll haunt him day and night. My return to England is fixed for the beginning of April, but I have a week or ten days allowed me for packing up and getting away. I shall certainly be in England (accidents excepted) by the middle of that month. Suppose you could be here in February, and the sooner the better, would it not be a better scheme? 'Terence' will not be the worse for a little delay, the baronet grows worse and worse in fortune, credit, and honour every day; *nil mihi rescribas, &c.*, was never better applied nor quoted.

"I hope you have received some comfort from Mr. Hutchinson.† You must not sleep over this matter—it has been too long neglected already, and yet, I suppose, some management with General Pulteney will be necessary. Have you told him of it? Do you think of opening it to

* M. Elie de Beaumont, advocate of the Parliament of Paris, and celebrated for his defence of the family of Calas. Beaumont was in London during the months of September and October 1764, and on the 15th of the latter month had the degree of Doctor of Laws conferred on him by the University of Oxford.

† John Hely Hutchinson.

him? Perhaps it would be better to hear it from yourself, than from the next oars (as they call themselves), the Darlingtons. You cannot hide it from the world, and they will perhaps be very ready, for many reasons, to tell it; think of it seriously.

"I shall send the prospectus of Monnet's book to Becket, by a gentleman who sets out for England to-morrow. I shall beg of you to say something about it in the St. James's. I will enclose a note to you, and perhaps save you the trouble. The book will be most elegant and entertaining upon all accounts.

"If my brother George can find, by the help of Goring, the book-binder, three volumes of "Nugent's Tour through Europe," in twelves, (I have one volume here, the others are in my study,) I shall give them to Mrs. Beaumont. There are people coming from London every day; perhaps you'll bring them yourself.

"My health is better and better, and, a kingdom for a horse, 'tis your only remedy. Write to me soon, and let me know your determination. I shall say nothing of the drama, your affair engrosses me wholly: all hurry, affectionately yours,

D. Garrick."

The Sieur Monnet endeavoured, in November 1749, to establish the exhibition of French plays in the Haymarket. Many of the nobility patronised the attempt, but John Bull would not suffer it; riots ensued in the theatre, and Monnet and his troop left the country. Garrick, in the following letter, appears to have taken a lively interest in some proposed publication of his friend Monnet, and more barefacedly points out a line of the puff direct for himself. If puffing had not in these times gone beyond what might have formerly been supposed its *ultima Thule*,

here were a lesson from a master of arts! Alas! dwell there such little souls in great men! Oh! Garrick, Garrick, that any man of true talent, whether fully aware of his established fame or not, should forget the dignity of genius, and descend to this!

"DEAR COLMAN, Paris, Jan. 27, 1765.

"I have taken a slice at the law-oratory here—I have heard Gerbier, the French Mansfield, twice. He has great merit, and pleaded with great warmth and force; I was much pleased, it was a *cause celébre*, but the particulars are too long to send you. I could be glad that something was put into the St. James's Chronicle, or into Say's paper (The Weekly Journal), for my friend Monnet. You have seen his prospectus by this time. The three volumes are very elegant, the songs well chosen, and the ornaments very well fancied, and executed with great taste. The price is only thirty livres, French, about eight shillings a volume. His expense for engraving the music and cuts, with the paper, which is made on purpose for him, will amount to more than a thousand louis d'ors.

"Suppose there was an extract of a letter from Paris, in which many things may be mentioned, and your friend among the rest, that it may take off all suspicion from me. I should be glad that you would add, diminish, correct, and blow a little pepper into the tail of the following nonsense:—

(*Extract of a Letter from Paris.*)

"'The great subject of conversation here at present is the affair of the hermaphrodite, who has married a girl at Lyons. They have annulled the marriage there, and in their sentence have condemned the hermaphrodite to wear woman's apparel hereafter. From the circumstances of his case (and very strange they are), the sentence is thought unjust,

and there is an appeal from it to the courts here, and the curious wait with great impatience for the consequences.

"'The Philosophical Dictionary, which has made so great a noise here, and thought to be Voltaire's, is absolutely disowned by him, and for very good reasons. The Parliament has taken it into consideration; and if the author is known, he may have reason to repent both of his wit and his indecency. The play-house, the French one I mean, cannot stand against the comic operas, at the Italians. The last, which is taken from our George Barnwell, and called "l'Ecole de la Jeunesse," is much admired. They have changed the murder of the uncle into an intention of robbing his scrutoire, where the young man finds his uncle's will, in which he is left heir to all his uncle's estate. This occasions a new catastrophe, by repentance, &c., and it ends happily and heavily. This brings me to mention the former director of the comic operas, our old friend Monnet. He is the gayest man in Paris, he has got enough by his operas to live happily, and has honourably paid all the debts that his unfortunate expedition to London brought upon him. He is greatly beloved by the men of wit and pleasure, who have assisted him in collecting materials for three volumes of the most chosen songs in the French language; it will be a complete history of their lyric poetry. He has great taste himself, and began his collection when he was the manager of operas. His engravings for the music, his elegant designs exquisitely executed, with the happy choice of the poetry, will make a very great addition to the musical library. The songs are all new, set by the best masters here. Pray recommend them as warmly to your friends as I do most sincerely and warmly to you.'

"I write in confusion, for the Ambassador's private secretary has promised to send this for me in his packet, and the man waits for it. I think you must leave me out as I have, or begin the paragraph about me. 'Our little stage hero looks better than he did.' If you think it right,

speak of me as you please, gravely, ludicrously, jokingly, or how you will, so that I am not suspected to write it. Pray touch this matter up for us, and believe me, at all times, and in all humours, walking, trotting, or galloping, ever and ever yours,

D. Garrick."

The next letter would make it appear that Colman had worked upon Garrick's hint for a *puff*, and had published his notable performance in the newspaper, so as to displease or alarm the mighty English Roscius.

"Dear Colman, Paris, Feb. 16, 1765.

"You see by the enclosed that you will have a letter by the next post; when the baronet sends it I shall direct it only, and put it into the post. I have desired to see him, for it was with much ado that we knew how to send the letter, but he keeps with the lady, and sees no body *chez lui*. I will go to the ambassador's to-morrow in hopes of catching him, and will call at Madame Clairon's for that purpose too; but I am sorry that you did not draw upon him in my favour, as the trade calls it, and then I should have had a sort of right to torment him. He has some ready money at present, and I could wish that we had our hundred and fifty out of it. Mons. de Beaumont wants to know what security you have, and he can tell you what is to be done here; though if you are safe in Ireland, what more can be done about the great debt?

"My dear Colman, you frightened me with the extract of a letter from Paris. I am very sorry that you mentioned the woeful want of me as manager and actor. They will suspect it came from me, and I have no right to say so much, as I have been taking my pleasures, and left the theatre for a time; it appears ungenerous and ungrateful

in me, which hurt me much. I beg that you will do all you can to make them not think the paragraph mine, if I am suspected. I never in my life, praised myself knowingly, except a little matter in 'The Fribbleriad,'* which always pinched me. Perhaps I am too sensitive about this delicacy, and nobody thinks about me or the extract; settle my mind about that matter in your next. The devil was in you to mention 'the hoop at Sadler's Wells,' for I wrote that very thing to my friend Arden at Lord Spencer's. I desired you to say something against me, and you stuck your pen in your heart, and wrote as you felt. I wish from my soul that you had not; if Becket mentions *you* to any body, it is just as bad. Madame Riccobini, a very good novelist, and a generous creature, is very angry with Becket; I took his part. I fear he did not do right; she is much hurt at him.

"We had a fine laugh at Baron d'Holbach's, where you dined once, about the wicked company I keep; I am always with that set. Pray set my mind at ease; I hate to be thought malicious. Has George said anything to you about it? Pray tell me, for I can't know elsewhere, what has become of Hardham's girl? What poem is that against Murphy and others? There is likewise a volume of poetry, with cuts and very pretty head and tail pieces, in Suard's hands; pray let me know something about these matters. Vive la 'Clandestine Marriage!'"

The Fribbleriad was a poem by Garrick, against a Mr. Fitzpatrick, who was at the head of the riots whereby half-price was established in the London theatres, except on the nights when a new pantomime was exhibited during the first winter of its performance. Fitzpatrick was a friend of Murphy.

* Printed in The Public Advertiser, Feb. 9.

Garrick, writing to his friend Arden from Munich, on his recovery in the preceding September, says, "As you have been troubled with part of my misfortunes, you must have the sequel. When I had got rid of my fever, and was so well as to ride out twice a-day, I was seized with a fit of the gravel or stone, collected by my lying in bed so long, that threw me back another week, so that though I cannot 'creep through an alderman's thumb ring,' yet I can thread the smallest tumbler's hoop, and I think at my return to England, of entering myself at Sadler's Wells, as much fitter for that place, than for the sock or buskin, at Drury Lane."

The wicked company alluded to at the Baron d'Holbach's, were Voltaire, d'Alembert, Diderot, Helvetius, and others.*

John Hardham, was Garrick's under-treasurer, and kept a snuff-shop in Fleet Street, at the sign of the Red Lion, where he contrived to get into high vogue a particular *poudre de tabac*, still known as "Hardham's Thirty-seven." Steevens, while daily visiting Johnson in Bolt Court, on the subject of their joint editorship of the plays of England's Dramatic Bard, never failed to replenish his box at the shop of a man, who for years was the butt of his witticisms. Hardham was the Mæcenas and referee of numberless embryo players, both male and female,

* Paul Thyry, Baron d'Holbach, born in 1723, of a wealthy family at Heidesheim in the Palatinate, but who spent the greater part of his life in Paris, where he gave excellent dinners, every Sunday, to the above-named coterie. The Baron was an *ultra* free-thinker.

of whom, it appears, he had recommended one of the latter to Garrick's notice. Hardham died a bachelor, September 20, 1772, and bequeathed 6,000*l.*, the savings of a busy life, for the benefit of the poor of his native city of Chester.

The volume of poetry which Garrick mentions was the first edition of Bishop Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry.*

In the following letter to Colman, Garrick is still in anxiety as to whether there had been any public inquiry for his return to the London boards.

" My Dear Colman, Paris, March 10, 1765.

" I can very readily believe what you tell me of my brother Consul. He will never forgive my being the means of his making a figure in the world, but this between ourselves. I have other matters for you when I see you, and which he does not expect, but, mum.

" Pray does Powell continue to visit you, and get a little sense from you, or is he topsy-turvey like the rest, and thinks, like ' Richard the Third,' that he is himself alone ? I hope he is wiser, but I 'll answer for nothing, or nobody, in a play-house; the devil has put his hoof into it, and he was a deceiver from the beginning of the world. Tell me really what you think of him. I am told by several that he will bawl and roar. Ross, I hear, has got reputation in ' Lear,'—I don't doubt it—' The Town' is a facetious gentleman.

" What do you mean, my good friend, by my being obliged to appear, if I manage? Upon looking over your letter, I find your words are ' expected to appear.' I must intreat you to be very sincere with me: does the town, in

* Printed in 1765, in three volumes, and reprinted with considerable additions and revision, by the Bishop's nephew, in 1794.

general, *really* wish to see me on the stage, or are they, which I rather think the truth, as cool about it as their humble servant? I have no maw for it, at all,* and yet something must be done to restore our credit: that I may be able to play, and as well as ever, I will not deny; but that I am able to do as I have done, wear and tear, I neither must, or can, or will. The physicians here, Dr. Gem among the rest, advise me, to a man, against appearing again. I had a little nervous attack last week, and the doctors croaked more hoarse than usual, against my thinking to do as formerly. Tranquillity and retirement from business, he says, are the only means to make me myself again.

"A tragedy here called 'The Siege of Calais,' written by a friend of the Clairon, and also my intimate, has made the people mad. The boxes, from top to bottom, are all taken for months to come. They give it, gratis, next Wednesday, to the people, when the doors will be opened at twelve o'clock at noon, and the play will begin at two. 'Tis the present epidemical distemper. The author has received many favours from the King:—three thousand livres, a gold medal, liberty to dedicate to him, and what not. The French will hardly bear to hear a criticism upon it; the following distich is handed about *in terrorem*:

> D'un Auteur Citoyen vouloir tenir l'honneur,
> C'est pretendre à l'Esprit au depens de son Cœur.

However there are some objections made by the cooler few. There is much merit in the play, and more luck in the choice of the subject. I rejoice at the success, for Monsieur de Belloy, the author of it, is a most ingenious, modest, and deserving man. His genius is an honour to his own country, and would be to any other. You may mention something of this in the St. James's, but not from me.

* "Nolo episcopari!"

"A gentleman, yesterday, shewed me a letter from England, in which were the following lines to me. Have they been in the Papers?

'Take pity, Garrick, on our erring youth,
Restore their minds to Shakspeare, and to truth;
Return, return, our hopes are all in Thee,
Save us from tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee!'

"I have not got it right, the third line is better in the original, but I have not time to recollect it. This is all I can say at present, for the boy waits, to take it to our ambassador's; it goes by his bag.

Yours ever,

D. Garrick."

The foregoing lines were evidently written for a puff, and Garrick afterwards concluded the Epilogue to The Clandestine Marriage in the same words.

"My Dear Colman, Paris, March 18, 1765.

"I think you are a little too hard upon Monsieur De Belloy, the author—my friend, sir—of 'The Siege of Calais.' There is flummery to be sure, but there is good stuff, too, and he will write better—nay, he has; for he read to me one, called 'Gabriele de Vergi,' a famous story, that to me is worth two of 'The Siege of Calais.' However, the French world is mad after it, and if my friend's head does not turn with it, it may boast great, good qualities.

"You did not answer all my inquiries in my last; you are afraid of making me uneasy, but I am as sound as a — what shall I say?—nervous man can be. Mr. Panchaud has not seen me but three times, I believe, and the last time was at his own house, just after a return of my fever; but, perhaps, he spoke as he wished, and, if so, I am flattered, for he is a very sensible, agreeable man. You made me laugh at the farthing candles: what a true picture! I am happy with the thoughts of seeing you upon the road I

will give either George or you notice of my coming: if I see you at Canterbury it will suffice, and I can perhaps tell you the day or night we shall be there. So you have nothing to do, but be ready booted and spurred, as the knights of old were, and set off at a moment's warning. Terence for ever! my dear little, great friend: there's your mind and body at once!

"I shall send you next Monday a little parcel—a great secret; it is a fable I have written, 'The Sick Monkey,' to be published on my return.* Severe upon myself. I have likewise got a print, engraved by Gravelot; I shall send you the plate. I would have Becket be in the secret and print it, but not publish it under his name, for it may be suspected. I shall cut it, and you may cut more, or return what I have queried. You will find yourself there as a Galloway. I have given some of my friends, whom I love, a little fillip; for heaven's sake take care to be secret. When Becket gives it to be published, he must swear the printer to secresy, for fear of offending me. I shall speak to Foley about your stockings, the other things will most certainly be seized; if I could bring Notre Dame upon my back for you, you should have it. Marmontel has given an imitation of Churchill's character of me, at the end of the Rosciad, finely done! Hochereau, the bookseller here, brings you this; pray be civil to him, and give him a dish of coffee."

In the poem of "The Sick Monkey," among the valuable qualities of Pug's friends, Garrick, in allusion to Colman, asserts:

> "The steed alone was firm and fast,
> The generous steed stood by him to the last.

* Another little art of Garrick; a poetical anonymous satire upon himself, by himself, to excite curiosity previous to his re-appearance. It failed of its purpose, and fell still-born from the press.

The horse, who saw his friend's distress,
Did thus his honest mind express:
'Come, prithee rouse, this life's the devil:
What, sigh and sob, and keep within?
What YOU, who used to frisk and revel,
For ever chatter, and for ever grin?
Zounds! it would make a parson swear!
Get on my back and take the air.'
Away they went, and as they pass
The hog, the dog, the bear, the ass,
Pug's diff'rent foes in diff'rent places;
If in the least they shew'd their spite,
The horse would whinny, snort, and bite,
And throw the dirt into their faces."

Garrick in comparing Colman to a horse, was at any rate assured of his *stable* friendship!

At this period Wilkes was wandering an uncertain course on the continent, but had been apprised by Colman of the decease of Lloyd. During his stay in Milan, Wilkes resided in the palace of Prince Triulzi. His arrival at Bologna, from Modena, had been announced on January 18th, and his setting forth for Florence daily expected. On reaching Naples, his mind appears to have been more at ease and at leisure, and he took the opportunity to suggest the propriety of Colman's participating in the publication of the works of both Churchill and Lloyd. The language of the following letter evidently flowed from the heart.

"MY DEAR SIR, Naples, March 25, 1765.

"I had your most friendly letter by Monsieur de Beaumont, but I have not been able before this to write to you. Your idea was so closely joined with that of poor Churchill, that for a long time I sought to avoid it, and

though it returned upon me in my late pursuits, I could not cherish it as I used to do. My grief began a little to abate, when the additional shock of Lloyd's death almost overset me. I have tried ever since, by journey and a variety of company, to recover the even tone of my mind, but I am at times more melancholy than it is almost possible for you to conceive a man of so good animal spirits to be.

" I had fully opened my mind to Lloyd as to my idea of the Second Volume of our friend's Works, and he had undertaken to write a short preface and to correct the press. I begged him, likewise, to announce the edition I had porjected at our dear Churchill's desire. I wish you would take upon yourself the publication of the Second Volume, and tell the world how you loved the man as well as honoured the poet. If you think worth while to enquire for my letters to Lloyd, you will find in them a variety of hints, which perhaps may be of use. You must give me leave, in my own edition, to take the opportunity of the notes on the ' Rosciad' to speak of you, not only as an author who does my country honour, but as a friend, too, who will ever be dear to me.

" I have taken a house in a very pleasant situation, which commands this town, and the finest bay in the world. I shall be there in a few days, and mean to give myself entirely to our friend's work and to my ' History of England.' I wish to equal the dignity of Livy. I am sure the greatness and majesty of our nation demand an historian equal to him.

" I live much retired, in the bosom of philosophy ; not in the least peevish, nor angry at the world. I live thus retired merely to attend to what I take to be my present business, and I form no idle resolutions *de fugâ sæculi et contemptu mundi*. My warmest wishes follow you and a few more. I only regret that my ill stars will not let me be in the same degree of latitude with you. I would soon make it the same place too.

"The foreign gazettes are very impertinently sending me into the service of the King of Prussia, or Sardinia, or I know not what republics. I hope my friends do me more justice at home, and think of me, as I do of myself, ever in the service of England, and for my life unalienably attached to my native country. The most unjust and cruel persecutions, the most unmerited outlawries, shall never warp my allegiance.

"I long for your 'Terence,' and the moment it is printed I hope you will order Becket to send it to me. The Jesuit's edition, which I wished to have got for you, was sold the day before to the Duke de Choiseul.

"I hope Lloyd's works will be reprinted in twelves; such an edition would certainly succeed. He was indeed a very pretty poet, as well as a very amiable man. I find he had subject of just indignation against Thornton; so had Churchill. I am a little inclined to revenge both their quarrels. Our dear friend wished I would. What is your opinion? If you wish him to be saved, he will owe his salvation only to you. All this is quite between ourselves.

"I have desired Mr. Becket to send me what is most valuable from the English press, and I beg you to give him directions from time to time.

I am, with very great truth and regard, my dear Sir,
Your affectionate friend and most humble servant,
To George Colman, Esq. JOHN WILKES."
Inghilterra.

When Lloyd's beggared circumstances rendered him an inmate of the Fleet prison, the friendship of Churchill was the only remaining source of comfort and support to him. Churchill's generous bounty of a guinea every week was regularly paid to him, as were likewise all the expenses of a servant who constantly attended him. When his benefactor's

death was told him, it fell on him like a thunder-clap; his last stay gone, he became ill, took to his bed, and living never rose again. He died Dec. 15, 1764, and was interred at St. Bride's on the Wednesday evening following; none of his associates in brighter days accompanying his body to the grave.

In June 1767, it was announced in the papers that the celebrated Mr. Wilkes was writing a History of England from the glorious Revolution to the end of the fourth year of the reign of his present Majesty; and that a considerable part of it was finished. Wilkes's stay at Naples was not of long duration. Mr. Samuel Sharp, in a letter to Garrick, dated Geneva, August 18, 1765, says, "Wilkes is here, very busy, writing and printing some things, which I hope his friends will prevent him from publishing. I am his well-wisher, and would wish he was not quite so zealous; such zeal may tend to the good of mankind, as martyrdom advances religion; but I should be sorry that my brother, or David Garrick, were the instruments in either case."

The love of fame was Garrick's darling passion. He held the small wits in contempt, and yet lived in fear of them, or as Dr. Johnson observed, "He knew that they had not the vigour of the bow, but he dreaded the venom of the shaft." Thus imbued, he found time, amidst the pleasures of the Continent, to write the poem of "The Sick Monkey," a fable in which he treated of himself as the monkey, and he imagined that this trifle would not only anticipate the malevolence of his enemies, but defeat their object. His anxiety on the subject

was fruitless. Grub Street was silent, and the play-going public expressed only joy and congratulation, while the poem was wholly disregarded.

" Paris, Easter Sunday,

" My Dear Colman, April 7, 1765.

" I have sent you the nonsense, that I threatened you with in my last. I am rather pleased with the notion, and shall continue so, till you undeceive me. I have copied it hastily, but you can make it out; if you approve the scheme, pray let it be printed ready for my arrival. I shall either send, or bring a little copper-plate by Gravelot, representing the fable, with great taste and spirit. I would have it printed in quarto, and well; and if you will correct the sheets for me, I shall be happy. It is written in too great hurry to be correct, but you will lick the cub, or knock it on the head, if it is shapeless. If you can think of a good motto, down with it. I once thought of '*Medicus sum.*' I have given a stroke at Dr. Hill, and the College of Physicians; you may out with it—I believe that personal satire is best avoided.

" I cannot say exactly on what day we shall set out, but I will either let you, or George know. If George can get us a good cook, we shall be obliged to him, and a house-maid, but we could wish that they had some character fixed to their tail. I hate to change, and the general run of them are such infernal b——s, that my constancy is always to give way, or I should neither be clean, or able to eat.

" If you would be so obliging to write me a line by the next post *chez l'Aubergiste à la Table Royale, à Calais*, I shall have great pleasure to receive a letter from you, after my journey. You will do it, I know, because it will give me pleasure; speak your mind about my fable freely. I have no mother's pangs with any of my bastards.

" I have this moment seen Mr. Beauclerk,* from London.

* Hon. Topham Beauclerk.

He speaks strangely of Powell; be sincere with me upon that head. 'What all my children!' I fear he has taken a wrong turn. Have you advised him? Do you see him? is he grateful? is he modest? or is he conceited, and undone?

"Once more, my good friend, correct my Fable; keep the secret most sacredly. Becket is your man, but not to be published under his name. It may be printed, ready, and the print for the frontispiece may be struck off in a day or two.

"Burn this for fear of its being lost, and of course, wetting the powder of our squib.

"You would not answer that part of my last letter which related to your fears of the public not being satisfied with my management without acting. You did not explain that; no matter, I am prepared. Be civil I beg of you to Hocherau. I have received great honours from the *Princes du Sang* and shall return to you, quite a Clodio in the 'Fop's Fortune.'

Yours ever, my dear Coley, &c.

D. GARRICK."

The subjoined letters from persons of eminence to Colman, relate to his translation of Terence's Comedies.

The first letter is from James Booth, who had obtained great celebrity and affluence as a conveyancer; though, professing the Roman Catholic religion, he was precluded at that time from practising at the bar. In Colman's Terence, the play of "The Brothers" is dedicated by him to Mr. Booth, from whom he had received great marks of kindness and friendship.

"DEAR SIR, Bloomsbury, April 22, 1765.

"I can delay no longer to return you my best thanks

for the fine present you have made me, of your Terence; but the everlasting obligation you have conferred on me, by letting the world know, in so public a manner, that you reckon me among the number of your friends, deserves every degree of acknowledgment in my power. My own labours would never have preserved the memory of me from oblivion, above half a dozen years beyond the grave, but by annexing my name to so permanent a work, as Mr. Colman's Translation of Terence, you have made my reputation almost immortal. Yet, it flatters me still more, to be thus persuaded, that you love me, and that you think me sincerely in earnest, when I profess myself to be,

Dear Sir, with infinite regard,
Your most obliged, most affectionate and
most humble servant,
JA. BOOTH."

Bonnell Thornton, a fellow-labourer in the literary vineyard, whose letter to Colman on the same subject follows, was the son of an apothecary in Maiden-lane, London. At the age of thirty, he took the degree of Bachelor of Physic, and in the same year, he and Colman commenced the periodical paper, 'The Connoisseur,' (January 1754). Their humour and talents were well adapted to what they had undertaken, and the portions written by the respective parties are undistinguishable. This work was highly successful, and on drawing it to a close, they declare, "For our own parts we cannot but be pleased with having raised this monument of our mutual friendship; and if these essays shall continue to be read, when they will no longer make their appearance as the fugitive pieces of the week, we shall be happy in considering that we are men-

tioned at the same time. We have all the while gone on, as it were, hand in hand together; and while we are both employed in furnishing matter for the paper now before us, we cannot help smiling at our thus making our exit together, like the Two Kings of Brentford, 'smelling at one nosegay.'"

Thornton and Colman were also two of the original proprietors of The St. James's Chronicle, which at once assumed a literary character far above that of its rivals.

Southey* says, "Colman translated 'Terence' with admirable skill, and Thornton, when the intention was imparted to him, conceived the design of translating Plautus in like manner. Colman assisted him by translating one play, 'The Merchant,' which is thus acknowledged in a pleasing dedication:

"Instead of prefixing your name to this work, with the distant air of a dedication, I wished to have had it coupled with mine in the title-page: I wanted you as a *comes jucundus*, an agreeable companion, in this new, unbeaten tract of translation, which you have so happily struck out before me. I own, indeed, I shall feel more than ordinary disappointment if I should be judged unworthy to rank with you in this humbler branch of literature; for I confess, in the pride of my heart, that one great inducement to my engaging in this task was the hope that our names would be mentioned together as the translators of 'Terence' and 'Plautus'; though I cannot aspire to an equal share of repu-

* Life of Cowper.

tation with the author of 'The Jealous Wife,' or the joint author of 'The Clandestine Marriage.'

"Dear Colman, April 22, 1765.

"I have been trying your 'Terence,' (for which I thank you) by reading the original all the way along with it. Upon my life you have astonished me: I hardly thought it was possible to have hit off the expressions so happily. I can easily perceive you flag now and then—I mean in the numbers, and I could almost wish in some places the numbers, where the dialogue is broken, had been a little less hard; but in the longer speeches you have been prodigiously happy. The language upon the whole is mightily the thing; not affected by stepping out of the way for less modern phrases. Indeed I think it the happiest version of any author possible. What a sweet thought it was! but then it requires a good English linguist to execute it. *Hic labor, hoc opus. Quod sibi quivis, et quæ sequuntur.*

"I say nothing of your notes, because I would not allow myself time but barely to skim them over at present, but surely they are very pleasing.

"I have only had time to go through the 'Eunuch,' the first that opened to me. No mistakes struck me in my cursory reading: one passage I suppose I myself did not understand before, 'tis at bottom of p. 136, and top of p. 137 of your version. You say, 'Other ills may be told,'—one would think the obvious meaning of *incommoda alia sunt dicenda*, was other ills may be called incommoda. But you, who have examined it, must know best.*

"You have put me entirely out of love with the bare

* In the edition of 1768, the reading is, "lighter ills may pass for *inconvenient*;" which tallies with Thornton's construction, and that of Madame Dacier, *le mot*, mal à propos, *est pour des accidens ordinaires*. Colman had therefore adopted Thornton's amendment of this passage.

idea of my 'Plautus.' Had I before ever so little confidence about it, I now quite despair; so far am I from being spurred and encouraged by what you have done. As you are got in the track, I really wish you would pursue it, or, could I bring myself to think I could travel with you, so lazy am I, and so fearful withal, I could wish to be a *comes jucundus in via* with you. Be it as it may, I most sincerely desire you will bestow a thought on it, with or without me.

"Supposing the whole of Plautus will not bear translating, which I much suspect he will not, a judicious selection might at least be made of him. Besides, he is a queer, crabbed fellow, and is enough to put any one, but one of your perseverance, quite out of all patience with him; and I question after all whether he is worth the trouble, take him all together. But of this more hereafter. Now to my own affair.

"I hear Garrick is either come, or coming to come. Do not entirely forget the manuscript I put into your hands, but at a proper time take occasion to mention it to him?* I mean, after you yourself have looked into it, and think it in the least worth a second thought.

"The beginning of this note might seem written purely as a sugar-plum to you to induce you to swallow down the end of it more glibely, but I am certain you will believe me in this and every particular

Your's in all sincerity and affection,

Bonnell Thornton."

Colman inscribed his version of the Eunuch, one of Terence's comedies, to the King's scholars at

* This seems to allude to some drama which Thornton had written, with a view to its representation on the stage. If so, his intention proved abortive, for he is only mentioned in the "Biographia Dramatica," on account of his translation of Plautus.

Westminster school, and presented a copy to Thomas Winstanley, their captain, who in acknowledgment sent the following reply :

" Friday, April 27, 1765.

" Mr. Thomas Winstanley's compliments to Mr. Colman, hopes he will accept of his thanks for his valuable present, in the following lines, which he would have sent him sooner had he not been indisposed.

" Siccine captat adhuc purus te sermo Terenti,
Ut juvet eloquio jam decorare novo ?
Nec mirum : *interpres* quas reddis adultus, *agendo*
In scenis aderas haud minor ipse puer.*"

The following epistle, is from the Rev. R. Shepherd, fellow of Corpus Christi College; one of the knot of academical geniuses who were the associates of Churchill, Colman, and Thornton.

" Sir, Brighthelmstone, September 27, 1765.

" Your favour was sent to me to this place, having first laid some time in Duke-street, or you would have received an earlier answer to your inquiries concerning the genuineness of Churchill's Sermons. He used laughingly to say

* To make the turn of the epigram in this letter clear, it should be understood, that when Colman was a King's scholar, he was reckoned a very good actor in Terence's Comedies, which are represented at Westminster by the boys, previously to the Christmas holidays; and the following paraphrase, by the late George Colman the Younger, may serve to give the English reader some idea of the point in the Latin tetrastic :—

Is then your love for Terence still so true,
That his pure style is graced again by you ?
Well may the man whole dramas thus translate,
Whose parts the boy so well could personate.

they were none of his: whose they were, the public, if they could, might find out. I always suspected them to have been compilations, and compilations of his father's: for he himself, I am persuaded, would not have submitted to that kind of drudgery. Some of them have been said to be transcripts from a Doctor Stephenson; but I have never given myself the trouble to inquire minutely into the truth of such a report. If I should in future have an opportunity of looking into such an author, your inquiry will induce me not to pass it by.

"Though you evaded my suggestion, the good humour with which you took it hath tempted me to go a step farther, and to propose to you a subject. As you hold a pen *in utrumque paratam*, equally successful in prose and verse, a new Boëthius, on the Consolation of Christianity, would I conceive form not only a useful, but a pleasing work. I have often thought of it myself, but had much rather see it in your hand for a hundred reasons.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

R. SHEPHERD."

To George Colman, Esq.,
Richmond, Surrey.

During the summer of 1765, there appeared, on the part of both Colman and Garrick, some serious intention of completing the comedy of the 'Clandestine Marriage,' for representation early in the ensuing season. Though professedly a secret on both hands, there are sufficient facts to show that the conjoint labour of the writers was known to their particular friends. Dr. Hoadly, in a letter to Garrick, dated September 24th, writes: "I am pleased to hear that

Mr. Colman's comedy, two acts of which you shewed me at Hampton some years ago, is in such forwardness, as I found, by his talk at his own house last winter, that he had not worked any farther upon it. I did not let him know I had seen any part of it, or was privy to the scheme, which surely is a good one. God bless you both."

As the season 1765–6 advanced, Garrick positively refused to play the part of Lord Ogleby, a subject upon which Colman had as positively made up his mind he would have represented by him; and as Garrick was determined, it caused an interruption of their friendly intercourse, and Colman retired to vent his chagrin at Bath.

Garrick urged an unwillingness to study any new part, and as the similitude between Lord Chalkstone in his own farce of Lethe, and that of Lord Ogleby, was very apparent, it is not a matter of surprise that he should object to play it. Add to this, that the petulance of Colman seems to have excited some expressions against Garrick as a manager, which by being carried to him by an intermeddler, (who by the way seems to have been his brother George, and to have minced no part of Colman's censure) the theatrical monarch felt aggrieved, and reigned in his own breath "aye, every inch a King."

Clutterbuck, the common friend of both, was very desirous of healing these differences, and in a letter to Garrick, of Nov. 9th,* ventures to attribute them to the hastiness of both their tempers. Colman, in

* Garrick Correspondence.

a very long letter, dated Dec. 4th, summoned courage to write to Garrick, and drew forth some explanations as to the several points on which he considered himself to have been deceived in the hope of his playing Lord Ogleby. There appear also to have been some disputes as to the share each had in the outline and colouring of that character. Colman's letter abruptly commences :—"Since my return from Bath, I have been told, but I can hardly believe it, that in speaking of the 'Clandestine Marriage,' you have gone so far as to say, 'Colman lays a great stress on his having penned this character on purpose for me—suppose it should come out that *I wrote it !*'"

This remark, and some others, seem to have stirred up the energy of George Colman the Younger, in 1820, to defend the rights and claims of the authorship of the 'Clandestine Marriage'; nor when we consider the excellence of the comedy (which may be put in the list of the acting drama next in merit to the 'School for Scandal,') can we be surprised at the zeal of the son, though somewhat lengthily expressed, in upholding the talent of his father. Since the minutest points of dramatic history have become objects of research and argument, the following documents may be thought acceptable. At all events, papers tending to remove doubts relative to the comedy of the 'Clandestine Marriage' are no anomalous appendage to a book, consisting chiefly of letters on theatrical topics, and of which those from Garrick to Colman (joint authors of the play above mentioned) form a considerable portion.

George the younger writes thus :—"Previously to giving the evidence in my possession, a reference to some opinions on this case may not be improper. In a series of plays with 'remarks' mingled with biography 'by Mrs. Inchbald,' that lady has observed of Garrick, that 'The favour in which he was held by the town made them attribute to his genius (and Colman never came forth to deny such conjecture) the most popular character in this play, Lord Ogleby. But it is rather to be suspected that Garrick did no more as a writer to the work than cast a directing hand and eye over the whole ; a task he was much better able to perform for the advantage of an author than to produce any one efficient part.'

"Well suspected! Mrs. Inchbald:—but I have already taken the liberty (of the press) to ask this lady how she happened only to suspect, when she should have done all in her power to ascertain.* It is incumbent upon writers to procure as much knowledge as they can of subjects on which they profess to instruct the public. On this subject it might have occurred that I had some information to give, and I would have given it with pleasure, if Mrs. Inchbald had done me the honour to request it ; but she chose to guess—it is the shortest way, and saves the critics and biographers a world of trouble !

"Much in the same spirit of preferring ease to duty, thus publisheth the continuator of the Biographia

* Vide preface to the Heir at Law.

Dramatica:—'We have usually heard that Garrick's share of this piece was Lord Ogleby and the courtly family; and Colman's, Sterling, and the city family.'

"Where did *we* hear this?—and hear it usually? It is a comical mode of scribbling a comedy!—The two families in this play are blended in conversation through most of the scenes; and, to write according to the foregoing receipt, one author must have penned a question, and the other an answer,—here, Garrick must have replied, for Lord Ogleby, —there, Colman must have rejoined, for Mr. Sterling,—and so on, *iterum iterumque*. The folly of listening to such a supposition needed not the additional absurdity of recording it.

"But the 'Continuator' continues; and says that, 'The following was related to us by a gentleman, who declared it was from the mouth of Mr. Colman himself: Garrick composed two acts, which he sent to me, desiring me to put them together, or do what I would with them. I did put them together, for I put them into the fire, and wrote the play myself.'

"This account differs from that which I have heard from 'the mouth of Mr. Colman himself.' What he told me, I shall tell again presently. When this play was first consigned by its authors to the press, the motto on the title-page, was,

> "Huc adhibe vultus, et in unâ parce duobus:
> Vivat, et *ejusdem simus uterque parens!*"

and, in the advertisement which follows the title-

page, the reader is told that,—'Both the authors, who have been before separately honoured with the indulgence of the public, now beg leave to make their joint acknowledgments for the very favourable reception of the 'Clandestine Marriage.' I had forgot to say, that the title-page bears the names of George Colman and David Garrick, as the authors.

"Is it likely that, either before or after such an avowal, Colman could so far commit his character as a gentleman, or even as a man of common consistency, as to assert that 'he put Garrick's two acts into the fire, and wrote the play himself?'

"It appears, however, from the contradictory reports, and surmises, to be gathered from Mrs. Inchbald, and the 'Biographia Dramatica,'—that Garrick wrote Lord Ogleby; that he did no more than cast a directing hand and eye over the whole; that the courtly characters belong to Garrick, and the *bourgeoisie* to Colman; and that Colman wrote the whole play!

"Enough of these incongruities; of their both having a share in the play, there cannot be a doubt: and that they did not construct it in the ridiculous way of each author alternately making speeches for the two families, is pretty clearly proved by one of Garrick's letters from abroad; in which he says, 'Have you thought of the Clandestine Marriage? I am at it.'

"The probable process was, that they consulted, first, as to the general plan, and, secondly, as to the conduct of the incidents and scenes; then wrote

separately; and afterwards compared and modified, together, what each had composed.

"I now proceed to the documents, which are in my late father's hand-writing, and which he has headed, 'Papers relative to plan of Clandestine Marriage.'

FIRST DOCUMENT.

G. C. to D. G.

IDEA OF PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

Garrick, — Earl of Oldsap*—an old lord that fancies every woman in love with him, which idea influences his whole behaviour, and makes him leer, ogle, and pay a ridiculous attention to all he meets. But this notion you are more fully possessed of than I.

Lord Sapplin, his son.

Traffic, a rich merchant of the city, who has created a great fortune by business; whose great ambition is to appear generous and genteel, which serves more effectually to expose his bourgeoise manners. He talks of all elegances, marks of grandeur, &c. in the most vulgar style. In this

* In these crude hints for a comedy, the dramatis personæ were not regularly christened; hence the names of performers intended to act some of the characters, will be found repeatedly substituted for the characters themselves:—thus, by Miss Bride, is meant the Fanny of the play; Miss Pope, Miss Sterling; and Mrs. Clive, Mrs. Heidelberg. Traffic afterwards became Sterling; Lord Oldsap, Lord Ogleby; and Lord Sapplin, son to the old nobleman, was changed to Sir John Melvil, his nephew.

character may be happily introduced all the modern common-places of humour on the citizen.

Lovewell, privately married to Miss Bride; warm, and sensible.

Mrs. Clive, Kennedy, or Bradshaw, sister to Traffic, and something of the same character in petticoats, only that he is rough and hearty in his manner, and she affects to be delicate and refined. Her dialect is particularly vulgar, aiming at the same time to be fine, not by murdering words in the slip-slop way, but by a mean twang in the pronunciation, as *Qualaty—famaly*, &c.

Miss Pope, eldest daughter to Traffic, a keen, smart girl, full of sense, spirit, wit, humour, mischief, and malice.

Miss Bride, youngest daughter to Traffic, a sensible girl, of a soft and amiable temper, not without proper spirit.

ROUGH DRAUGHT OF THE GENERAL SCHEME.

A treaty of Marriage is supposed to be on foot between the Court and City family, in which it is intended that Lord Sapplin, Garrick's son, shall be married to Miss Pope, eldest daughter to Traffic. It happens, however, that the young lord has contracted a violent affection for Miss Bride, who is, before the beginning of this play, clandestinely married to Lovewell. The efforts made by Lord Sapplin to bring about his match with Miss Bride, instead of Miss Pope, the perplexities arising there-

from to the young couple, Lovewell and Miss Bride, the growing jealousy and malicious artifices of Miss Pope, and the naturally involving the old Earl (Garrick) in circumstances tending to shew his character, together with the part which Traffic and his sister may naturally take in this affair, to make up the story of the play.

Here is undoubtedly sufficient ground to build a comedy upon, as well as a faint outline of the plan of the comedy itself. For these three days I have boen endeavouring to collect my thoughts, in order to fill up this outline. My labour, I hope, has not been entirely lost, though I have not half accomplished my design. I have drawn out the above rough sketch, merely to enable you to think in the same train with me. That you may be still better acquainted with the stuff of my thoughts, I have here subjoined some loose hints of acts, scenes, manner of conducting the story, of shewing the characters to advantage, &c.

N.B.—Before I go into any thing else, I will first submit one thing to your consideration concerning the general scheme drawn out above, and that is 'whether the plot would not be still more pleasantly embarrassed, by introducing a character (a good one) openly intended to be married to Miss Bride?' This, perhaps, might make her's and Lovewell's situation more critical, as well as Lord Sapplin's, and might produce some pleasant circumstances, from the direction of Miss Pope's jealousy to a wrong object.

LOOSE HINTS OF ACTS AND SCENES.

In the first Act, and as soon as possible, the audience should be made acquainted with the two grand points on which the whole will turn; *viz.* the clandestine marriage of Bride and Lovewell, and Lord Sapplin's defection from Pope, and attachment to Bride. In order to do this the better, and to heighten Lovewell's character above the insipid level of good sort of men in comedies, as well as to account more probably for the proposed union between the two families, I will suppose Lovewell to be a relation of the noble family (a nephew of the old Earl's, perhaps), placed with Traffic in order to be brought up as a merchant, in which case the young Lord might not improperly make him the confidant of his passion and intentions, which will become both interesting and pleasant to the audience, who are in the secret of his being privately married to the object of his Lordship's passion; and Lovewell's emotion and constraint on receiving this intelligence, meeting together, might afford room for some theatrical touches of even a Garrickean nature. In this first act, too, the old Earl (Garrick) might be shewn dressing, and he might speak of himself, hold his son cheap as a man of gallantry, talk of what he could do with the women, that even now all the family are more in love with him, &c.; a short lawyer scene (*à la* Hogarth), with some family strokes on mortgages, settlements, &c. might perhaps be introduced. If the city family are at all

produced in this act, they may be supposed in expectation of the arrival of the Lords, preparations making on all hands, Traffic talking of his venison, turbot, pine-apples, &c. His sister, on tenterhooks to receive persons of *famaly*, and Miss Pope's elevation, and pride about her noble match, and contempt of her sister, &c.

II.—Between the two acts, I think I will suppose the Lords to have arrived, for the sake of opening the second with a scene of Oldsap, (Garrick) with all the women, though this may be contrived fifty different ways. Such a scene, however, I am sure would be pleasant. A scene of humour also might be struck out from Traffic's shewing his garden, and giving an account of his improvements in the modern way. You will not find many materials for this in your own garden at Hampton, but you may among your neighbours. In this act also, Lord Sapplin may find means to make a declaration to Miss Bride, whose amiable character may be shewn, and her spirit properly exerted in refusing him; she may expatiate on the indelicacy of his transferring his addresses from her sister to herself—an indelicacy in which she would partake, if she gave the least encouragement to them, or even heard them without emotion. Miss Pope's jealousy might, in this place, be excited by some interesting circumstance, which should give cause to her suspicion, incense her against Lord Sapplin and her sister, whom she supposes endeavouring to circumvent her, and she may resolve to carry her point by making a friend of the old Earl, by paying her court to him, and

playing on his foible, which her shrewdness has discovered, and her malice determines to turn to her advantage.

III.—N. B. Though I mark the acts, I by no means would suggest to you that I have here planned out any thing like the form of the business of the play. But to go on.

Here it may be resolved between Lovewell and Miss Bride, that she shall break the secret of their marriage to the old Earl. His peculiar behaviour to her, which she modestly construes into the good-natured partiality of an old gentleman, induces her to take this liberty; for he (Garrick), fancying all women in love with him, behaves to all women as if he was making love to them. Miss Bride applies to Garrick for this purpose, but after having revealed Lord Sapplin's proposals, and mentioning that she has particular as well as general reasons for declining them, her confusion will not permit her to go on, and she retires without making the discovery. Having dropped some faint hints of her devotion elsewhere, the old Earl takes it for granted she means himself, though her modesty will not let her speak out, looks upon this as a declaration of her passion, and though all other women will break their hearts, determines to take pity on her. Miss Pope may afterwards apply to him, and intermixing flattery of him, make her complaint of Lord Sapplin, and tell Garrick that Lord S. and Miss Bride mean to trick her, in which situation Garrick's confidence that she is mistaken in imagining that Miss Bride has a passion for Lord S.—that he knows better—

that he can tell where her affections are placed—with things of the like nature—may produce a scene, which may very properly follow up that described immediately before.

IV.—Here, if the character meant to be married to Miss Bride were introduced, good use might be made of him,—

> ' As a tool,
> Which knaves do work with, call'd a fool.'

Miss Pope might apprize him of the wrong intended both to herself and him, shew him the supposed reason of Miss Bride's indifference, and work him up to counteract their plot. In the meantime Lovewell and Miss Bride determine that he (Lovewell) shall apply to the old Earl since she failed, which he does, and on his mentioning Miss Bride, before he can tell his story, Garrick acquaints him of his own passion for her, and Lovewell is in his turn as much confounded as his wife was before. Garrick resolves to break the matter to the family by opening his mind to the old lady, Traffic's sister, who at first imagines that he means herself, and on finding her mistake treats him with contempt. Cætera desunt.

Of the *dénouement* I have not as yet even conceived those imperfect ideas I have got of some other parts. Think of the whole; and think in my train, if it appears worth while, and when you have thrown your thoughts on paper, as I have mine, we will lay our heads together, Brother Bayes.

" The foregoing rough sketch affords no clue for discovering which of the authors first started the idea of founding a comedy on Hogarth's plates of *Marriage à la Mode,* but it establishes the fact that the outlines of the plan, and of the principal characters, were designed by Colman; and, to those who have seen or read the play, it must be evident how closely it has followed the main incidents proposed in the sketch. Witness, the intended union of the two families; Sterling's preparations, at his villa, for the arrival of Lord Ogleby, and his suite; Sir John Melvil's falling in love with the sister of his proposed wife, and imparting his flame to the man whom that sister has clandestinely married; the jealousy of Miss Sterling, the equivoque of Lord Ogleby supposing Fanny has conceived a passion for him, and the consequences produced by it; the introduction of the Lawyers: in short, all the leading incidents have been adopted, and nothing rejected except the introduction of a person openly intended to be married to Fanny.

" As to the characters, we have the several contours of their features in the above hasty draught: of Canton, indeed, and Brush, and the chambermaids (the appurtenances to the two families, naturally thrown in, during the progress of the work), there is no mention: and of Lord Ogleby's vanities and gallantry, Colman says to Garrick, who originally thought of acting the part himself, " You are more fully possessed of this notion than I."—A word or two on this in due time.

" The *dénouement* seems to have been the puzzler

for both authors, and brings to mind the dramatist who said that he wished there were no such things as fifth acts. It was, I conclude, after they had 'laid their heads together,' that my father scrawled the latter part of the following.

SECOND DOCUMENT.—LOOSE HINTS OF ACT V.

Scene of Sterling, Ogleby, lawyers, &c., on filling up blanks, and settling all the clauses of the settlement; disputes arise, and Sterling, against both matches, declaring that he will not marry his family into a chancery suit. In the midst of their disputes enter Miss Sterling laughing immoderately, and brings in Betty, trembling, who, being interrogated, discovers the whole of the clandestine marriage.

V.—Lovewell, and Fanny, and Betty in Fanny's apartment. Betty may tell them that Mrs. Lettice has been pumping her; Lovewell tells Fanny that finding the misconstruction of Lord O., he was just on the point of explanation when Sir John appeared, but that he will certainly break it the next morning to Sir John, and this night shall conclude her anxieties on the clandestine marriage. (Scene 2.) Another apartment. Miss Sterling and Mrs. Heidelberg in their night-clothes—to them Lettice, who tells them she has been on the watch, and saw a man go into Miss Fanny's room. They immediately conclude it to be Sir John, and Miss Sterling resolves to expose her sister and Sir John; the family alarmed, various night figures, Betty brought in trembling, who discovers the whole affair; then

Lovewell, and at length Fanny, who being pardoned, Sir John's match breaks off, and the piece concludes by Sterling and Ogleby both joining in good humour about Fanny and Lovewell.

" Such are the documents: a few words more and I conclude.

" In respect to the report of Garrick having written the entire character of Lord Ogleby, my father once told me that it was not true ; that, as an instance to the contrary, he (my father) wrote the whole of Ogleby's first scene. He also informed me that one of Garrick's greatest merits in this work (and it is a very great one) was planning the incidents in the last act; the alarm of the families, through the means of Mrs. Heidelberg and Miss Sterling, and bringing forward the various characters from their beds to produce an explanation, and the catastrophe. I regret that when my father imparted this, I did not make further inquiry; but I was then 'a moonish youth,' and troubled my head little or nothing about the matter. He always talked, however, of the play as a joint production.

" Dramatic connoisseurs may discover the styles of authors ; and there are few such connoisseurs who will not, I think, be of my opinion, that far the greater part of the dialogue in this comedy came from my father's pen rather than that of Garrick. I certainly agree with Mrs. Inchbald in her criticism on the limited powers of Garrick as a writer.

"But, after all, the authors stand accused of plagiary!—of stealing from an unprinted farce, entitled 'False Concord,' written by the Rev. James Townley, formerly Master of Merchant Tailors' School.

"'It is worthy of remark, that in this farce were three characters (Lord Lavender, Mr. Sudley, an enriched soap-boiler, and a pert valet,) which were afterwards transplanted, with the dialogue of some scenes, nearly *verbatim*, into the 'Clandestine Marriage,' (brought out two years afterwards) under the names of Lord Ogleby, Mr. Sterling, and Brush. These facts were first made public by Mr. Roberdeau, in his Fugitive Verse and Prose,* published in 1801; Mr. R. having married a daughter of the late Mr. Townley.'†

"On this question, I have little more to observe, than that there are several instances of detracting, in this way, from the merits of very successful authors:

'Garth did not write his own Dispensary.'

Townley's farce, it seems, was only acted one night (for Woodward's benefit), and he did not print it. It would be strange if Garrick robbed, or were accessary to his colleague's robbing his friend Townley. In the two pieces, there may be some coincidence, without theft; but the groundwork of

* I have inquired for Mr. Roberdeau's book, but cannot procure it.

† Biographia Dramatica.

'The Clandestine Marriage' was professedly suggested by Hogarth's prints. At the worst, there is no great literary crime in catching hints, if any were caught, from an apparently stillborn farce, and improving upon them in a play of lasting vitality.

GEORGE COLMAN the Younger."

CHAPTER VI.

1765—1767.

Reconciliation—Mr. Clutterbuck—Beefsteak Society—Dr. Louth—Christmas Carol—Rival Dancing-masters—Foote—Christopher Smart—Dr. Schomberg—George, the younger—The proposed purchase of one-fourth of Covent Garden Theatre—Dr. Gem—Slingsby—Monsieur Favart—The English Merchant—Garrick mystified—Colman a Theatrical proprietor—General Pulteney—Bickerstaffe—Samuel Johnson—Whitehead—His prologue—Death of General Pulteney—His large property, and Will.

Whether Mr. Clutterbuck or other friends interfered to reconcile the two dramatists, or whether the considerations of mutual interest, may not in a great measure have aided in healing the breach between Colman and Garrick is not precisely to be determined; but it would appear, from the subjoined short note from Garrick, that Colman must have made some overture to him.

"My Dear Colman,

"Becket has been with me, and tells me of your friendly intentions towards me. I should have been beforehand with you, had I not been ill with the beef-steaks and arrack

punch, last Saturday, and was obliged to leave the play-house.

> " He that parts us, shall bring a brand from Heav'n
> And fire us hence.
>
> Ever yours, old and new friend,
>
> D. Garrick."

The beef-steaks, arrack punch, and Saturday, all savour very strongly of a visit to the "Sublime Society of Beef Steaks," held at that period in Covent-garden Theatre, where many a clever fellow has had his diaphragm disordered, before that time, and since. Whoever has had the pleasure to join their convivial board, to witness the never-failing good-humour which predominates there; to listen to the merry songs, and to the sparkling repartee, and to experience the hearty welcome and marked attention paid to visitors, could never have cause to lament, as Garrick has done, a trifling illness the following day. This society is still in vigorous existence (1840), and is upwards of a century old. There must have been originally a wise and simple code of laws, which could have held together a convivial meeting for so lengthened a period. The number of members is only twenty-four, and the names enrolled have been those of persons eminent in rank, and talent in various professions. The days of meeting are every Saturday, from November until the end of June.

Garrick soon afterwards complimented Colman, in a verse written at Hampton, December 20, 1765, on his translation of 'Terence.'

"Joy to my friend, as English wit
Which Johnson, Congreve, Vanbrugh writ,
My Terence shall be known:
Joy to myself! for all the fame
Which ever shall attend thy name,
I feel as half my own."

And two days afterwards he addressed the following note to Colman:

"My Dear Friend, December 22, 1765.

"I wish I had partaken of your feast of letters this morning at Strahan's. I must tell you that Dr. Louth, one of the party, read one of Terence's plays in your translation with Garnier, who is now at Hampton, and was highly entertained with it, and pronounced it a most excellent performance. I could not help sending you this piece of news, for the Doctor's judgment is of too much consequence not to feel it."

David's policy is very apparent in the above few lines, and in the letter which immediately follows, dated, Christmas day, 1765.

"Dear Coley,

"God forgive me, I wrote the nonsense on the other side, or rather composed it, while our parson was preaching this morning. It is a kind of rondeau which the French, and our fools who imitated them, were once very fond of.

"I have read the three acts of the Comedy, and think they will do special well; but why did you not finish the first act, as you would have it? and if you had hinted at Lord Ogleby's vanity and amorous disposition, by way of preparation, to the fourth act, as we talked it over, would it not have made the strong scene there, more natural? I think 'The Grown Gentleman,' will do, if Messrs. Hart and Dukes will not set their scholars upon us.

"I have schemed my Epilogue, it will be uncommon at least.

"To George Colman.

Christmas day.

"May Christmas give thee all her cheer,
And lead thee to a happy year!
Though wicked gout has come by stealth,
And threats encroachments on my health;
Though still my foes indulge their spite,
And what their malice prompts, will write;
Though now to me, the stage is hateful,
And he, who owes me most, ungrateful;
Yet think not, George, my hours are sad;
Oh no! my heart is more than glad:
That moment all my cares were gone,
When you and I again were one.
This gives to Christmas all her cheer,
And leads me to a happy year."

"The Grown Gentleman" here spoken of, was Lord Ogleby; and Messrs. Hart and Dukes were then the fashionable professors of the polite science of dancing. In January 1760, Mr. Dukes advertised "Grown gentlemen or ladies taught in so private a manner, as to be seen by none but himself if required; at Dukes's long room, in Paternoster Row, Cheapside." This advertisement produced so successful a result, that Mr. Napthali Hart, (a rival professor, whose scene of evolutions was at Essex House, Essex-street, Strand,) quitted it in the Midsummer following, doubtless in consequence of a notice from his landlord, who was in fear of his premises being shaken down; and removed his academy to a large room opposite the Surgeons' Hall, in the Old Bailey, where he

announced his readiness to teach "grown persons to dance the minuet and country dances in the genteelest manner, and with the greatest privacy and expedition."

This same Napthali Hart had also a cosmetic shop at the corner of Belle Sauvage Yard, Ludgate-hill, where he sold the best fiddle-strings in England; pomatum to keep the hair from falling off, or growing grey, and when off, to make it grow again, and a surprising long string of wonderments not to be outdone by the most accomplished adepts in the lucrative art of puffing *direct* of the present day.

The line in the Christmas carol

"But he, who owes me most, ungrateful—"

we presume to allude to Garrick's partner, Lacy, with whom Garrick had a dispute at this period, which gave him the inclination to dispose of his share of Drury Lane Theatre.

Foote, while on a visit to Lord Mexborough, with the Duke of York, fell from his horse, and fractured his leg in so dreadful a manner, that amputation of the limb could alone save his life. Garrick, in a letter of condolence to him, dated February 13, 1766, writes: "Notwithstanding the severity of your misfortune, yet it must be the greatest consolation to you to hear how many have most cordially felt and lamented it, among which number my friend Colman has particularly shown his regard to you." Foote's reply is dated Cannon Park, on the 26th February. After thanking Garrick for his proffered kindness, he adds, "I am

greatly obliged to Mr. Colman for his friendly feelings on my late melancholy accident. I am no stranger to his philanthropy, nor how eagerly he has adopted one of the finest sentiments in his favourite author, *Homo sum, et humani nihil à me alienum puto.* I rejoice with him, and the public, on the success of his Clandestine Marriage. Lady Stanhope came here last night, gave me a very good account of it, and is vastly pleased."

The following letter is from Christopher Smart, a poet of some celebrity in his day; his lighter poems are his best. He was engaged in a variety of publications; and at one period of his life, was confined for madness. He died a prisoner for debt.* The performance alluded to in the letter must have been the comedy of the Clandestine Marriage.

St. James's Park, next door to
" Sir, the Cockpit, Feb^{y} 27th 1766.

" I find myself reduced by the necessity of the case again to tax such of my friends as are disposed to do me the honour of their names. I observe, from the conversation in general on your late performance, that either your benevolence has won you more affection, or your wit commanded more applause (both I suppose) than that of any person in my memory.

I am, with much respect,

Your obliged servant,

Christopher Smart."

* A collection of his poetical pieces was published in the year 1791, with some memoirs of his life prefixed to them.

About this time, probably from the impaired state of his health, the English Roscius was compelled to take a trip to Bath; and on March 13, 1766, the name of Mr. Garrick appears amongst the arrivals of that fashionable watering-place.

"My Dear Coley, Bath, April 12th, 66.

"I must say a word to you by our friend Keate. He is a very agreeable man, and has comforted me much in this strange mixture of mortals at Bath. No man starts a laugh better, or makes a better chase, but alas! my dear friend, my hunting is over. I was last week feathered Mercury, and now I have lead at my heels; I have a very serious fit of the gout, and how long it will last, and when I shall see you, even my good Dr. Ralpho can't tell me. I am in general, cent per cent. better, for my present purgatory. Qualms, pukings, and yellowness, &c., have left me, and I have no complaint but my gouty leg, of the street-post order, that occasions me to break a commandment a little oftener than I used to do.

"I was preparing to exhibit for a few nights at Drury Lane, but I believe I must decline it, and I trust His Majesty will excuse me. Pray consider Quin's Epitaph * a little—don't hurry yourself, I have time enough; I shall not send it to the statuary, till I have been some time in London. Your criticism about the Epilogue I believe is just; I was afraid of disconcerting my water-drinking, and hurried it a little too much, there is something however that will do, with t'other lick. How goes our bastard on? We have escaped well; Hawkesworth has been kind—it pleased me much. Who wrote the answer to Kenrick's Review? Johnson sent it me, through Steevens, last week, but mum, it is not quite the thing; by Johnson's fondness for it, he must have felt Kenrick. What things we are! and

* On his monument in the Abbey Church at Bath.

how little are we known! I will always except you and me, for I think our hearts are well known to each other. If either of us had had the least ingredient of some of the mortal compositions that shall be nameless, we might have lost the greatest blessing of our lives, at least I speak for one. I am obliged to write fast, and don't know if I am well understood, but I can't correct. I am sure that your Plautus* must please. I wish you had rid your hands of it, for *cætera desid*^{r}.

I saw your friend Mr. Selwyn here, and spoke to him. I have seen Clutterbuck, and all goes well. We shall come to town together, and then the whole may be settled. Thank you for attending George to Hampton—what said the French hero? Did he seem to be satisfied with me? He did very wrong to take such a journey contrary to my directions, *voilà l'étourderie françoise.* Pray when you see Davies, the bookseller, assure him that I bear him not the least malice, which he is told I do, for having mentioned the vulgarisms in The Clandestine Marriage; and that I may convince him that all is well between us, let him know that I was well assured, that he wrote his criticism, before he had seen the play. *Quod er*^{t}. *dem*^{m}. I forgot to tell George, that I would have him consult with Mr. Beighton, about the seeds that came from O'Brien. Beighton will know better what to do with them, than my gardener. Desire George to write to him, and send the seeds by the first opportunity. Baker, the bookseller, will tell him how to send the seeds the easiest and readiest way. Keate is now with me, and his postchaise at the door, so I can only say, what I have said a thousand times, and what I will say, to the last moment of my life, that

I am my dear Colman's
Ever affectionate friend,
D. Garrick."

* Colman, as has been previously stated, contributed one play to Thornton's translation of Plautus.

Dr. Ralpho was Schomberg, who was Garrick's great favourite as a physician, but he could find no favour from him when he attempted to practise as a dramatic author; for Garrick repeatedly refused his pieces. The Doctor wrote a farce called the "Death of Bucephalus;" "The Judgment of Paris," a burletta; and a tragedy, entitled "Romulus and Herselta." Dr. Schomberg's prescriptions were evidently the best of his writings: they would act; —his plays, *vice versa!*

Colman, at this period, visited Paris, and the following letter from Garrick giving so agreeable an account of George the Younger, must have been very gratifying to the fatherly feelings of George the Elder.

"Dear Colman, Hampton, June 30, 1766.

"I rejoice much at your safe arrival at Paris. You set out in storm and tempest, and we were afraid that the sea would have been rather too frisky for your stomachs; but the worst is past, and I hope Madam and you are well contented with Leviez and his accommodations.

To begin with what you are most interested about, I must tell you that your sweet boy is at this instant as happy and as well as ever I knew him. I have made him two visits since your departure, which he has taken most kindly: the last time his eyes sparkled when he saw me. He is greatly desirous to know why I call him Georgy go-ging, and has very seriously interrogated his Duenna about it. We have worked very hard in the garden together, and have played at nine-pins till I was obliged to declare off. He is well taken care of; indeed the old Lady (Mrs. Terrill) and the maiden Pierce, are most trusty guardians, and be assured that you may set your tender hearts at rest about him. I go

to Essex to-morrow, and at my return we are to have a day at Hampton, and he is to make love to my niece Kitty, and a plum-pudding. He seems very fond of the party, and we will endeavour to make him forget his loving parents. Once more, my dear friend, let not a single thought about your boy disquiet you: he could not be better if you were with him, so no more of that.

Thomson dined with me at Hampton; he spoke very highly and affectionately of you. He has no design upon us the next season, but talks of trying his hand again. He intends writing to you; I believe him to be a very good natured, well-meaning man. Steevens has inquired after me to give me some papers from you: what they are I can't tell. We have missed one another; I am still in the dark, and you don't mention what they are in your letter.

I have had a letter from Bickerstaff: he is at Paris, and is going to give some account of our theatre in the 'Journal Encyclop.'; you will see it, I suppose.

Saunderson* tells me that they have laid the timbers for the first floor of your house at Richmond. It rises most magnificently to the Ferry passengers; you will be surprised to find yourself master of the chateau at your return. Don't lose the autumn for planting trees to screen you from the timber-yard. My love to Madam, and remember me to Leviez. You must not see a single French friend of mine, but you must tell him how much I am his humble servant. God bless you, and believe me,

Most affectionately yours,

D. Garrick."

Monsieur Leviez was a printseller, Rue des Arcs, Fauxbourg St. Germain's, and it was at his house that

* Saunderson was the Master Carpenter of Drury Lane Theatre.

Colman resided during his stay in Paris. "I am aware of the laugh," says George the Younger, in reference to Garrick's account of himself, "I shall excite, by alluding to this description of myself, as 'a sweet boy;' and, were it not for the vanity of quoting my own scribbling, I might say, that my acquaintance would exclaim, like Job Thornberry, in John Bull, 'Are you the pretty boy? bless my soul, how you are altered!'"

Colman, in his posthumously printed Memoir states, "It has, I know, long been taken for granted, that such was the strength of my predilection for theatrical possessions, that I would, in spite of all competition, and without hesitation, forego all other expectancies, however magnificent or alluring; and that at a certain era of my life, this position was most fully verified, by my purchase of a fourth of the patent of Covent Garden Theatre, whereby I knowingly and voluntarily forfeited the intended bequest of the Newport estate, under the will of General Pulteney.

"Nothing but my respect and gratitude for the memory of those, from whose bounty I still derive a considerable part of my income, determined me to abide and patiently endure the contempt and obloquy that such a received opinion brought upon me, lest, by vindicating myself from causeless slander, I might appear willing to throw a stain on those, who had done much for me, merely because they had not done more. This opinion of my character, with as much delicacy as the truth will admit, I shall show to be groundless.

" At this critical time, an offer was made to me of a share in Covent Garden Theatre, and I had before had the refusal of Mr. Garrick's share at Drury Lane; still, however, I did not enter hastily into these undertakings, without attention to the assurances I had received, and which were now put to the test. In March 1767, I signed an agreement with my friend, Powell, under a penalty of three thousand pounds, in case of non-performance, and I afterwards went to Bath."

So far, Colman states the fact, but he immediately takes up the thread of his narrative upon a fallacious showing. In truth, he lost General Pulteney's good will, from pertinaciously living with Miss Ford, and pursuing his predilections for theatrical management. General Pulteney wholly disapproved of Colman's taking any part in the purchase of the patent right and property in Covent Garden Theatre; and on the authority of Bishop Douglas,* it appears that " the General offered Colman a seat in Parliament, and to provide amply for him, if he would quit his theatrical connexions, particularly Miss Ford, who afterwards became his wife."

The declining health of Colman's mother, who had some property, induced him possibly to suppose

* John Douglas, canon residentiary of St. Paul's, elected Bishop of Carlisle, 1787, and translated to Salisbury in 1791. General Pulteney's proffer is recorded in one of Isaac Reed's manuscript Memorandum Books, as part of a conversation between him and the Bishop at the palace at Salisbury, August 24, 1794, only ten days after Colman's decease, which was then the subject of their discourse. Bishop Douglas died in 1807.

her scene of life was about to close, or he might have calculated on being put in possession of it while she was living, to aid him in the contemplated purchase of the fourth share of Covent Garden Theatre. It was so attractive to him, that it fixed his purpose irrevocably, notwithstanding it threatened the extinction not only of all hopes from the Pulteney family, but also the friendship of Garrick. Garrick, in a letter from Hampton, in the preceding July, had acquainted Colman of the intended sale by Beard and others, and enjoined him to secresy, as the buyers were not then declared.

"My Dear Coley, Hampton, July 15, 1766.

"I have received your letter by Miss Burney,* and was surprised to find that my first had not reached you.

"I shall write to you as often as I think I can give you the least pleasure. I was taken ill with a giddiness yesterday upon Hampton Common, in going to see your sweet boy, and was obliged to return home, and send Cautherly, to know how he was, not having seen him for a fortnight (my stay at Mistley). He was quite well, and wanted to see me. We are to have a day soon, if good weather, at Hampton, which he mentions often, and has set his little heart upon it. Be assured that he shall want for nothing in your absence, and that I will even administer to his pleasure. We will 'sing old rose and burn the bellows' at Hampton. I would have you follow the Chevalier up briskly; he will be afraid of being exposed—now or never.

"Before I went to Rigby's, he (George Colman the younger) was so high in spirits, that he would sing 'The Chimney Sweep,' which he did most exquisitely, and has

* Miss Burney, daughter of Charles Burney, D.M., author of the History of Music. She was afterwards Madame D'Arblay.

promised that Mrs. Garrick shall hear his whole budget of songs and stories. The Clandestine Marriage has been twice played at Richmond, to great houses, and much liked, but I am told woefully performed. Lord Ogleby, by Dibdin.* I read it to him one of the days I visited Georgy, and the little cunning rogue was so pleased at my instructing Dibdin, and cocked his eye so ridiculously, that I am sure his old lady (Mrs. Terrill) and Miss Pierce have me often at second hand.

" I am sorry Madam wants to leave Paris already, I was always doubtful of her liking the place; but I hope that Miss Ford will bring over some French airs, and the language to perfection.

" The Ministry all to pieces! Pitt they say, and a new arrangement. Beard and Co. are going positively to sell their patent, &c., for sixty thousand pounds. 'Tis true, but mum. We have not yet discovered the purchasers. When I know, you shall know; there will be the devil to do. If you would alter the 'Country Wife,' now is your time; this you might easily, and I have a girl for it who will please you much.† If you won't, I will. We must have it soon in the season; try your hand: you shall have my hints for sending for. Miss Wright ‡ not with us; that's not well; but I am in spirits, and ever thine, my dear Coley upon the gallop.

Most truly and eternally thine,

D. Garrick."

This letter, and that which follows, were ad-

* Charles Dibdin, subsequently the successful dramatic author, and the admired writer of naval songs.

† Miss Reynolds, then of the Bath Theatre. She was recommended by Dr. John Hoadly to Garrick, but he did not pledge himself as to any great capability in dramatic talent. Garrick engaged her, and she made her *début* in November, as Peggy in the " Country Girl."

‡ Afterwards Mrs. Michael Arne.

dressed to Colman, in Paris. Colman replied, July 21, and complains of ill health, thanks Garrick for his kind attention to his little boy, complains of the melancholy face of Dr. Gem, his physician in Paris, whom Suard jocosely designated "Le joyeux Dr. Gem." The wine, or the water, did not agree with Colman; moreover, he was bitterly disappointed in not obtaining the money he had advanced to the Baronet already mentioned, whom he could only get to accept bills for the amount. Thus out of spirits, he had no inclination to set about The Country Wife.

"My Dear Coley, Hampton, July 31, 1766.

"I wish to God that we had you again here; your letter has made me miserable. Let me beg you, for my sake, not to suffer your spirits to sink in the manner they have done in your last letter. I am sure the illness you have proceeds from nothing but the change of air, and the Seine water. However, you have Dr. Gem, and I am satisfied; pray present my love and best services to him, and if he does not send you back to us, as you went, I shall forget all the good he did to me, and abuse him most cordially.

"I can almost prophesy the subject of the letter you received from the person of fashion. Covent Garden patent &c., have been upon sale; one Whitworth and Spilsbury, Mrs. Pritchard's son-in-law, are some of the parties concerned in the purchase. I guess that your letter was from the first, offering you a share. They have spoke to Foote and others, but the treaty is at a stop, I believe, for want of cash, but I am not certain. Foote goes on now well, and very uneasy that Barry and Dancer are coming to join him at the Opera-house. He is to give them half the profits; the expenses will be great, and he finds that all

his friends think him in the wrong to have them. You 'll think so too, and when Barry comes he 'll find Foote very cold: they say he abuses him already. I have made a beginning upon the "Country Wife;" I like my scheme, but it is a great change in the piece. I wish you were here, that I might tell it to you.

"Mr. Pitt, now Lord Chatham, and Privy Seal, have set us all in an uproar! I don't understand his policy; if I am right he is wrong, but I am a fool, and have not lost all my virtue. Pray what have become of Yates and his wife? The story of them rejoiced me; have you talked with them? what are their schemes? If you were well enough to see the Dancer, Slingsby, hint to him from yourself that he did wrong to send his brother to make an engagement with us, and then fly off. We have a good case in Equity; he is engaged to the Opera-house; the managers of the Opera dislike the trick he has played us. When you see Monnet present my love to him, and tell him I received his last, and hope that he will engage the new man-dancer for us, if he is good and is comic.

Yours ever and most affectionately,

D. Garrick."

Come away, come away, &c.

To this letter Colman replied on July 27, 1766, that he was getting better. "My lank jaws begin to recover flesh and colour; and though I have considerably fallen away, I hope to be visible, without the help of a microscope, by the time I reach England. There hang out here, pirated prints from Reynolds's Picture of you (Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy), which are underwritten, '*L'Homme entre le Vice et la Vertu.*' "

The new man dancer was named Guidetti. Colman continues, "I suppose Monnet has dropped all

thoughts of sending him to you, for he is one of the worst I ever saw: a little grotesque pantomime, but no execution as a dancer, and so d——d thick winded, that he is only fit for Lacy's Infirmary."

"Monnet brought me Favart the other morning, and seemed vastly happy at seeing two little authors together. In the fulness of his heart, he had told Favart that I had given a very fine translation of Telemachus—he meant Terence."

The weather being bad, both Colman and Miss Ford got tired of the French metropolis. A letter from Madame Riccoboni to Garrick, dated August 10, 1766, states "*Monsieur vôtre bel Esprit*," as she was pleased to designate Colman, had then quitted Paris.

The next letter from Garrick to Colman is dated Sunday, Feb. 15, 1767.

"My Dear Coley,

"Hampton has had a prodigious effect upon me; my cough and hoarseness are fifty per cent. better, for the change of air.

"Instead of coughing all night, I have been disturbed but twice or thrice, and that not rudely, and have passed the rest of the night very pleasantly. My wife has presuaded me to stay here till Wednesday, when I hope to wait upon the English Merchant, with all my wits and spirits about me. In the mean time I could wish, if not disagreeable to you, that you would look in upon them on Wednesday, and I will make my appearance on Thursday morning. I hope to see you on Wednesday evening; my wife says, if you will dine with us, on Wednesday, at four, she will present us with a fine haunch of venison; say you will, in a note by the bearer, to-morrow.

"You must write to me, and say if I am to furnish an Epilogue for the 'Merchant.' I certainly will do my best, if you are not provided.

"If you intend to stand by the London Journal, I will prepare some comicality for it; I have a hundred thoughts about it, and will be always doing something.

"I intend 'Crambo' to be the laughing, rhyming, reviewer of every thing. Mrs. Pritchard has sent a most kind message to me, and will do any thing I desire her. She shall set the part a-going, and when we are safe landed, though, if Mrs. Bennet played it, there is not the least danger, Mrs. Hopkins may relieve her in case of indispositions. Poor Becket is very angry with Baldwin for abusing what we act, and he prints. Pray keep up the ball; we shall have some sport with him.

"My love and best services to Madam, and a kiss to your little boy, and my warmest affections to yourself,

My Dear Coley,

D. Garrick."

The Comedy of "The English Merchant," written by Colman, was founded on L'Ecossaise of Voltaire: it was played for the first time at Drury-lane, on Saturday Feb. 21, 1767.

Drury Lane Theatre was now so enlarged as to hold, in theatrical phraseology, 337 guineas, instead of its former receipt of 220 guineas. It had been customary to leave every new play on its own footing, unsupported by an afterpiece. Garrick wisely thought that this was not judicious, for as the doors opened at five, the performance was over at nine o'clock. He therefore proposed to add to all new productions of five acts, a farce, or two-act comedy, as the case might require, and charged the authors who

took the benefit-nights seventy guineas, instead of sixty, which had been the previous charge for the house. Colman demurred, and adopted the old course; but he repented of it, as, notwithstanding King and Mrs. Abington did all that histrionic talent and friendship could accomplish, the attendance in the boxes was but meagre: the play was more praised than followed.

Between this period and April, Colman made up his mind, in conjunction with Powell and others, to buy Covent Garden Theatre. The fact that Colman was about to be one of the purchasers, astonished the Drury Lane proprietors, who appear to have been first apprised of it by a communication from Theophilus Forrest to George Garrick; and a coolness again lowered on the friendly intercourse of the authors of The Clandestine Marriage.

Garrick in a letter, from Bath, April 5, 1767, to his brother George, intimates, that "Colman and Chauguion have arrived: we pulled off our hats, but did not smile. Our friends here will stir Heaven and earth to bring us together: make the best of it, it will be but a darn.*

The co-partnership, in which Colman was concerned, seems almost to have been beyond Garrick's comprehension. In another letter from Bath, he desires his brother, George, to tell Lacy, that he believed his suspicions were well-founded, and would not suggest to Colman the smallest hint of what he knew. He adds, "Colman has told me that

* See Garrick Correspondence.

he has an affair to open to me, but we have always been interrupted by somebody or other, so I have not yet had the whole, and which he has some qualms in bringing out. However, I am prepared, and he will be surprised at my little concern and ease upon the occasion."

The next few lines of the letter prove that Garrick felt some concern about it. "I am sure there is something in it; the more I think of it, the more I am puzzled. Who finds the money? what is the plan? who are the directors? d——n me, if I can comprehend it! but I shall know more. What! has Holland no hand in this? is he hummed? I have not the least idea of the matter, nor have I the least notion of their doing anything to give us one moment of uneasiness." * But Roscius was evidently in a fidget: in a subsequent letter he desires George to tell Lacy, his partner, "that the news of the sale of the other house did not give him the least uneasiness; that it was impossible that it could hurt them, and if Powell was to be director, that they would have reason to rejoice, for he was finely calculated for management!" Very shortly after this, Clutterbuck and Dr. Schomberg insisted on a reconciliation between Garrick and Colman, and a dinner took place in consequence at Bath, where they were all very merry.

"The publication of private letters," Colman observes in his memoir, "I have ever thought exceptionable, unless some very particular circumstances render it proper and necessary to produce them.

* Garrick Correspondence.

In the present instance, I do not see how I can otherwise vindicate my character, and therefore I trust my memory will not be loaded with reproach, merely for an act of self-justification." When at Bath he received the following letter from General Pulteney:

"DEAR COLMAN, London, April 27, 1767.

"I have received your letter from Bath, which surprises me not a little, to find in your letters the same jealousy and reproach as I met with in the last year, from Bath, which were, as I told you then, falsely grounded, from malice and curiosity; and now again I am the more convinced of it, for I declare to you, that I never gave any cause, to any one whatsoever, that from any report in your disfavour, I had the least thought of paying any regard to it, nor indeed have any persons, by misrepresenting you, ever taken that liberty to speak of you disadvantageously; for it is well known the veneration I have for everything Lord Bath has recommended, and I will assure you, over and above, that I have a long rooted disposition in me to befriend you in all things; yet I can see some things that are not greatly pleasing, as most certainly the letter which you speak of, was rather too ludicrous to be written to an old gentleman and your friend, which I found fault with, and I did not expect to find it justified, by urging that I went to counsel, in disapproving of it, for I think the impropriety of it would have been disapproved of by a weaker judgment. Your jealousy about your connection,* may be founded with reasons, but however that may appear to the world, and may give me a concern, I had not deviated from my own good will, nor from Lord Bath's intention. I have thus far explained my affection for you this once; but I hope you will give no further attention to the malice or

* Allusive to his living with Miss Ford.

curiosity of Bath acquaintance, but to disregard them, as I shall do, if it continues: but otherwise rest assured that I am inclined and very desirous of being always

Your faithful friend and servant,

H. PULTENEY."

"From this reply," Colman adds, "it is evident the General misunderstood what I had said in my first letter concerning the consultation of counsel. My unhappy attempts at pleasantry and raillery, always so well received by Lord Bath, were rather injudiciously directed to his brother, and my inexperience and want of knowledge of the world, must be my only apology. It is likely, too, that I might be more anxious than ordinary, from a sense of the covenant I had recently, and perhaps too hastily, entered into just before I left London."

Colman's rejoinder to the General was in these terms:

"DEAR SIR,

"Please to accept my warmest acknowledgments of your kind letter, and give me leave to assure you, that I shall ever entertain the most lively sense of your goodness to me, on this and every other occasion. The sole meaning of my last was to acquit myself of disrespect or ingratitude. I was conscious that I had never consulted lawyers on the subject there mentioned, which I understood had been insinuated to you; and I thought myself bound, in duty to you, to wipe off the reproach that such an imputation carried with it."

"Before my return from Bath, early in May," continues Colman, "the expected revolution in the state of Covent Garden had become a subject of

public conversation, and of course furnished materials for sundry paragraphs in the newspapers. I waited immediately on General Pulteney, who received me as cordially as ever. We had a full and free conversation on the subject: he expressed neither warmth nor anger on the occasion; but on the whole seemed rather to disapprove of the undertaking, in consequence of which several letters passed between us."

Colman, by the death of his mother, Mary Colman, the widow of Francis Colman, May 3rd, 1767, acquired an addition of fortune. This circumstance George Colman the younger thus records, " On the death of my worthy grandam, she bequeathed to my father six thousand pounds ;" so that it appears, after all, that he was not dependent upon Lord Bath and General Pulteney for every shilling of his fortune. This six thousand, we are to presume, made part of the fifteen thousand pounds, which was got together by borrowed sums from Becket, the bookseller, and others. In the mean time, Colman was practising his hand for management, and wrote the Prologue spoken by Shuter, on Saturday, June 6th, at the opening of the old Theatre, on Richmond Hill.

" A plain booth of boards, ill put together,
To raise a stage, and keep out wind and weather."

It would appear that General Pulteney had expressed some dissatisfaction at the new speculation into which Colman was about to enter; for in the following letter he expresses his regret at the cir-

cumstance, and offers to relinquish the proposed contract, and to pay the penalty:

"Dear Sir, June 7, 1767.

"It is almost impossible to conceive or express the uneasiness I have suffered since my return from Bath. The late alteration in my circumstances was of itself sufficient to make me very indifferent about the engagements I had entered into, whatever advantages they might promise; but the hint you gave me of your disapprobation of them, made me earnestly endeavour to extricate myself. The difficulties that attended those endeavours have only served to add to my uneasiness; but it is now confidently said, that other bidders will appear, and this, or some other unforeseen circumstance will, I hope, still defeat the purchase; if not, I have no resource but to break through my engagement, and submit to a penalty of three thousand pounds. Judge, then, of the distraction of my mind, between the fear of displeasing you, and so disagreeable an alternative.

"I will not say any thing in vindication of the undertaking; it seems to be disagreeable to you, and that is enough to make me repent of having thought of it. Before it was proposed to me, I knew that Sir William Davenant was the original proprietor of this very patent; that Sir Richard Steele had received from the Crown a favour of the same nature; that Sir John Vanburgh not only built the theatre in the Haymarket, but was actually engaged in the management of it, as well as Mr. Congreve in that of Lincoln's Inn Fields; not to mention several gentlemen now living, of rank and fortune superior to my own, who had formed the like intentions; so that I really did not think of bringing any reflections on myself, or those who had honoured me with their countenance and protection. Any thing that might carry the slighest appearance of disrespect to you was the farthest from my thoughts, and I cannot but be miserable, while I suppose myself liable even

to the suspicion of it. As to my precipitation in this affair, I feel the consequences of it but too sensibly.

I am, Dear Sir,
With the utmost gratitude and respect,
Your most obliged and obedient humble servant,
G. COLMAN."

To this letter General Pulteney favoured him with the following answer.

" DEAR COLMAN, June 10, 1767.

" Although we have lived in friendship form any years together, yet I cannot expect you will relinquish an agreement in hand, at the expense of three thousand pounds, nor shall I cease to be your friend and servant,

H. PULTENEY."

Becket, the bookseller, came forward to assist Colman in his purchase, and, as it appears, lent him one thousand pounds. " As I had no friends I could trouble for any thing considerable," says Becket, in a letter to Colman, " I gave you all I had, which was one thousand pounds, and I declare to God, I had scarce a guinea left, when I gave it to you; but poor Mrs. Colman begged of me to do all I could, and I did it. She, the best of women, came and thanked me in the kindest manner, and told me how much you were obliged to me; for you had looked upon my mite more than all you had from any other quarter. I now take this opportunity to declare to you, that if I had had at that time, ten thousand pounds, I would have lent you every shilling."

" I shewed the General's letter of June 10," Colman continues, " in answer to mine of the 7th, to

several friends; to Garrick in particular, who all congratulated me on the contents." Garrick's advice was possibly that Colman should personally confer with the General before his going to Tunbridge, but the journey to town for that purpose brought on one of those fits of nervousness which over-exertion produced in his weak frame. Perhaps Colman quailed at the thought of again encountering the disapprobation of the General, as on the 25th of June, it appears that Messrs. Colman, Harris, Powell, and Rutherford were declared the purchasers of Covent Garden Theatre, although the fact was not suffered to transpire till a few days afterwards. Colman therefore excused himself to the General in the following letter:

"DEAR SIR, Richmond, Monday June 29, 1767.

"When I left London on Saturday, I fully intended to ride to town this morning in order to pay my respects to you before you set out for Tunbridge, but having been seized with a little feverish disorder last night, I am advised not to stir out to-day, which reduces me to this method of sending you my best wishes for your good journey, and your receiving all possible benefit from the waters.

"The affair of Covent Garden, must now very soon be determined; and, let it turn out which way it will, I shall ever retain the most grateful sense of your kindness on this occasion. Knowing your sentiments, I had rather not embark in it; but, should I be driven into it against my inclination, I have still the consolation of reflecting that my sincere respect for you, induced me to offer not only to forego all lucrative views in it, but to submit to a penalty that would have swallowed almost the whole of my little fortune; and that you, with the same spirit of generosity

which you have ever exerted towards me, declined such a sacrifice, and reconciled me to myself, assuring me of the continuance of your friendship, the loss of which I should feel as the heaviest misfortune that could befall me.

I remain, with the truest attachment,
Dear Sir, your most obliged and obedient Servant,
G. Colman."

To General Pulteney.

The time had, however, now arrived when the announcement in the public papers could no longer be withheld, and Colman considered it most prudent to divulge the circumstance in his own way to General Pulteney, which he did in the following letter:

" Dear Sir, July 2, 1767.

" Before this reaches your hands you will have been apprised, by the papers, of the completion of an affair which I do assure you I have taken every method to avoid, since I understood it was at all disagreeable to you. The other bidders talked so very confidently of advancing upon our price, that, till last Thursday was over, I was never thoroughly persuaded that our party would be the real purchasers; and if our opponents had ever produced the money to back their assertions, it would have afforded me an opportunity to recede, which I should most certainly have embraced. As the matter stood, nothing but the penalty could have procured me that opportunity. I hope you will at least be convinced that I have on all occasions told you the truth, and that in this instance I have acted with due respect to your opinion, since I have been acquainted with it; only availing myself of the kind assurance you were pleased to give me of the continuance of your friendship, without exacting my submission to a very heavy penalty. Of this, and all your other favours, I shall

ever retain the deepest and most grateful sense, and remain, with the warmest wishes for your health and happiness,

Dear Sir, your most obedient servant,

G. Colman."

Garrick was mightily vexed at this arrangement, but having been reconciled to Colman at Bath, he vented his anger on Powell, whom he accused of bad behaviour and breach of articles. Garrick felt, however, assured that from old associations, Colman would on any emergency take shelter under his wings; so he smothered a feeling of resentment. In one of his letters he writes, "As for Powell, he is a scoundrel, and Colman will repent his conjunction in every vein; nay, he does repent it, and wishes the affair was broken up, but I believe it has gone too far. I hope to God that my partner has not talked with Powell of an agreement or a friendly intercourse between the houses; that would be ruin indeed. I cannot forgive Powell."

On referring to the foregoing correspondence, it will not be quite uncharitable to surmise, and the more especially from being aware of Colman's predilection for theatrical pursuits, that he was very uncertain in his own mind, as to the result of General Pulteney's intentions as regarded his future fortunes; and that Colman put the experiment of the signing of the agreement with Powell with the penalty of three thousand pounds, as a feeler with his rich relative; to bring it to the alternative of inducing General Pulteney to declare his ultimate intentions, and buy him off, or to leave Colman without further demur in his darling object to

become a theatrical manager. Colman, who viewed his own conduct with partial eyes in reference only to himself says, " From these letters and my answers, the falsehood and absurdity of the proposition, that by my purchase of a fourth of the patent of Covent Garden Theatre, I knowingly and voluntarily forfeited the intended bequest of the Newport estate, I think will most eminently appear. Truth, however, obliges me to mention that honest Joshua Peele, a Chancery solicitor, long employed and deservedly esteemed by the family, waiting on General Pulteney on business, soon after his return from Tunbridge, the General said to him, ' So Colman has got the playhouse at last?'—' Yes,' says honest Peel, who had seen the General's letter, ' but I am glad to find that you will not cease to be his friend.'—' No,' replied the General, ' I will not cease to be his friend, but I will not be so much his friend.' The General had certainly a right to say and do as he pleased; but it might, perhaps, not unreasonably have been expected that he would have said thus much in his answer to my letter of June 7th, an answer written scarce three weeks before the purchase was completed. In that answer he, in few but strong words, states our long friendship, his leave and consent that I should not incur the penalty of my agreement, and his assurance that he would not cease to be my friend. This assurance, connected with his preceding letters, letters particularly showing how he would be my friend, was surely not to be received as a forerunner to his subsequent conduct.

"Nor can I conceive that General Pulteney wrote his letter, dated June 10, under such an idea; but, however that may be, his last will entirely cancelled all that part of Lord Bath's that he had promised to confirm, relative to my succession to the Newport estate, which the General commuted for an annuity of four hundred pounds per annum."

Colman now was launched on the troubled ocean of theatrical management, and one of his first points was to gain the assistance of the popular dramatist, Isaac Bickerstaffe, who it appears was under certain articles of agreement with the proprietors of Drury Lane Theatre.

Bickerstaffe, in a letter to Garrick, dated July 27, 1767, while forwarding the comedy of 'The Hypocrite,' an alteration by him from Cibber's 'Nonjuror,' with the introduction of the character of Maw-worm, expressed himself hurt by the report that Colman had offered him articles. He had refused to accept them, and he had no desire to break his agreement with Garrick, though it might not be strictly binding.

Some understanding, however, must have taken place between Colman and Bickerstaffe, for Garrick refused to accept 'The Hypocrite,' or the music of a piece, called 'Inkle and Yarico,' which Bickerstaffe had ready, while he remained under contract with Colman.

Colman also solicited by letter, that Dr. Johnson would favour him by writing the opening address for Covent Garden Theatre, under his management; but the Doctor, perhaps, was aware of the difference

existing between the rival managers, and unwilling to offend "Little Davy," alleged illness, as a cause of non-compliance with Colman's request, in the following letter:

"Sir, Lichfield, August 19, 1767.

"The omission of answering your letter proceeded neither from inattention nor disrespect, but from fearfulness to promise, and unwillingness to refuse. During this contest of my doubts and wishes, which ill health made me less able to compose, I intended every week to return to London, and make a letter unnecessary by telling you my purpose. But ill health, which has crusted me into inactivity, has, by not permitting me to do my business, hitherto precluded my return. I will not deny that I am glad to find my poetical civilities superseded by a voluntary performance, for I knew not how to set about that which the desire of preserving your regard and of increasing your kindness would have made it very painful to decline.

I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

To George Colman, Esq. Sam. Johnson.

My compliments to dear Mr. Davies."

The Theatre Royal Covent Garden opened under the management of Messrs. Colman, Powell, and Co., Sept. 14, 1767, with the following Prologue, recited by Powell, and written by W. Whitehead, Esq., Poet Laureate:—

"As when the merchant, to increase his store,
For dubious seas, advent'rous quits the shore,
Still anxious for his freight, he trembling sees
Rocks in each buoy, and tempests in each breeze;
The curling wave to mountain billows swells,
And every cloud a fancied storm foretells:

Thus rashly launch'd on this theatric main,
Our all on board, each phantom gives us pain;
The cat-call's note seems thunder in our ears,
And every hiss a hurricane appears;
In journal squibs we lightning's blast espy,
And meteors blaze in every critic's eye.
Spite of these terrors, still some hopes we view,
Hopes ne'er can fail us—since they are placed in you.
Your breath the gale, our voyage is secure,
And safe the venture which your smiles insure;
Though weak his skill, th' adventurer must succeed,
Where candour takes th' endeavour for the deed.
For Brentford's state two kings could once suffice,
In ours, behold! four kings of Brentford rise;
All smelling to one nosegay's odorous savour,
The balmy nosegay of—the public favour.
From hence alone, our royal funds we draw,
Your pleasure our support, your will our law.
While such our government, we hope you 'll own us;
But should we ever tyrants prove—dethrone us.
Like brother monarchs, who, to coax the nation,
Begin their reigns with some fair proclamation;
We, too, should talk at least—of reformation;
Declare, that during our imperial sway,
No bard shall mourn his long-neglected play;
But then the play must have some wit, some spirit,
And we allow'd sole umpires of its merit.
For those deep sages of the judging pit,
Whose taste is too refin'd for modern wit,
From Rome's great theatre we 'll cull the piece,
And plant, on Britain's stage, the flower of Greece;
If some there are, our British bards can please,
Who taste the ancient wit of ancient days,
Be ours to save, from time's devouring womb,
Their works, and snatch their laurels from the tomb;
For you, ye fair, who sprightlier scenes may choose,
Where music decks in all her airs the muse,
Gay opera shall all its charms dispense,
Yet boast no tuneful triumph over sense:
The nobler bard shall still assert his right,
Nor Handel rob a Shakspeare of his night.
To greet their mortal brethren of our skies,
Here all the gods of pantomime shall rise:

Yet 'midst the pomp and magic of machines,
Some plot may mark the meaning of our scenes;
Scenes which were held, in good king Rich's days,
By sages, no bad epilogues to plays."

Colman had not long been seated on his theatrical throne, when the death of his patron occurred: General Pulteney died October 26, 1767, and two days afterwards Colman received the following letter from Mr. Pulteney.*

" Sir, Cleveland Row, October 28.

" I am very sensible that as Lord Bath had named you for Mr. Newport's estate, the change made by General Pulteney's will, though in favour of his right heirs, must have been a great disappoinment to you. I do assure you that I had not the least knowledge till the will was read, in what manner the General had settled that estate, or that he had done me the honour to mention my name at all in relation to it; and I further assure you, that I never in my life mentioned you to the General, or did you the smallest prejudice with him.

" I easily conceive what I myself should feel in your situation, and it will give me great pleasure if, by any attentions, or by any good offices in my power, I can contribute in any degree to diminish your regret, which I am sensible it is impossible entirely to remove; and Mrs. Pulteney, I can venture to assure you, entertains exactly the same sentiments.

" If you will give me leave, I will wait upon you as soon as the necessary attentions upon this occasion are over, and

* Daniel Pulteney, the younger brother of the Earl and General, was then dead, and left an only daughter, who married William Johnston, and who, as next heir, assumed the name and arms of the Pulteney family.

I shall take every opportunity to convince you that I am, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

WILLIAM PULTENEY."

To George Colman, Esq.

To this letter Colman thus replied :—

" SIR,

" I am much obliged to you for the kind attention you have been pleased to shew me in your letter. Did I imagine that you would believe me, I would say that I was not at all sorry for General Pulteney's reversal of Lord Bath's nomination of me for the Newport estate ; but sorry or not sorry, I do most solemnly assure you that I am not in the least disappointed ; and if I feel any regret on this occasion, it is out of regard to the memory of the General, as I could have wished he had not taken the needless trouble of ratifying more than once under his hand a promise, which upon reflection he did not think it proper to fulfil. Be that as it may, be assured, Sir, that nobody congratulates you on your good fortune more sincerely than myself. I took the liberty of sending to inquire after your health and Mrs. Pulteney's the day before yesterday, and proposed waiting on you the first opportunity. Please to present my best respects to Mrs. Pulteney, and believe me,

Sir, your most obedient servant,

G. COLMAN."

Neither the Earl of Bath nor his brother, General Pulteney, left heirs of their bodies ; and the manner in which the latter bequeathed his immense wealth, shows too plainly the disastrous results of the folly of Colman's conduct.

According to the tenor of the General's will, the Pulteney estates in Westminster, Middlesex, Somersetshire, Salop, Montgomeryshire, Yorkshire, and

other places,* charged with an annuity of four hundred pounds per annum, to George Colman, Esq., he bequeathed to Mrs. Pulteney and her issue. To her he likewise gave his house in town, with the furniture, plate, and pictures, and all the money and notes in his possession at his decease.

The reversion of the Great Bradford estate, which Colman, according to the Earl's meaning, was to have inherited, the general left to William Pulteney, Esq., the husband of Mrs. Pulteney; and till that event happened, he gave Mr. Pulteney the interest of a large sum of money, which was afterwards to rest in the possessor of the Great Bradford estate.

To his god-daughter, Miss Burrard, he gave a small estate near Whitechapel, estimated at more than one hundred pounds per annum.

To Miss Wroughton, sister to His Majesty's Minister in Poland, he left the sum of eight thousand pounds, and two hundred pounds per annum, long annuities, with all his jewels, rings, miniature-pictures, and his own library of books.

To Lord Chetwynd, Sir Francis Clarke, Mr. Pulteney, Mr. Burrard, Mrs. Burrard, Mr. Heron; his agent, Mr. Roberts; his steward, Mr. Garden; and his valet de chambre, Mr. Livermore, one thousand pounds each.

To the Rev. Dr. Douglas, one thousand pounds,

* It was also stated, in November 1767, that besides the immense fortune General Pulteney left, there was the reversionary grant of the ground in Arlington-street, all Piccadilly, to Hyde Park Corner, in all forty acres, all built on, which at the expiration of the leases would bring in £.100,000 a-year, confirmed by Act of Parliament to Lord Bath when he obtained his title.

to pay for Lord Bath's monument, together with Lord Bath's library.

To St. George's Hospital one thousand pounds.

To his housekeeper, and clerk of the kitchen, one hundred pounds each, and to all his other servants two years' wages and mourning.

To defray the charges of his funeral, five hundred pounds; and he desired to be buried in the same vault with his brother. The remainder of his personal estate, which was supposed to amount to at least one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, he gave to the Earl of Darlington, and his family, to be laid out in the purchase of lands, which were to be burthened with annuities of six hundred pounds per annum to the Earl's relations; Mr. Frederick Vane, two hundred pounds; Mrs. Frederick Vane, one hundred pounds; Mr. Raby Vane, two hundred pounds; and Lady Mary Carr, one hundred pounds.

Lord Darlington and his family were in the entail both of the Pulteney and Bradford estates, and to carry the above devises into execution, he created a trust for five hundred years to Lord Chetwynd and Mr. Burrard.

The executors to General Pulteney's will were Lord Darlington, Lord Chetwynd, Mr. Pulteney, and Mr. Burrard. To the two last he gave one hundred pounds per annum during their lives, for their trouble as executors.

CHAPTER VII.

1768—1771.

Theatrical Disputes — Mrs. Lessingham—Lessinda—Mrs. Bellamy—Macklin—King Lear—The Royal Merchant—Kenrick—Voltaire—Dr. Johnson—Mrs. Williams—General Charles Lee—Gentleman Smith—Death of Powell—Joseph Reed—Charles Holland—Death of Holland—Foote—David Ross—Thomas Linley — Miss Linley—R. B. Sheridan — William Kenrick—Mrs. Clive—James Love.

The year 1768 does not present us with any correspondence which Colman might have considered of sufficient consequence to preserve, although he appears immediately after the commencement of his management to have been plunged into 'hot water,' independently of a dispute with the Drury Lane Proprietors, respecting the engagement of à Mrs. Lessingham, who could not have been much of an object, as neither Garrick nor Colman would give her a salary of four pounds a week. It was insisted, however, that the transfer of the services of the aforesaid lady was the real cause of the quarrel between the managers. In allusion to this, a periodical of the day remarked, that "It must excite the wonder and surprise, perhaps the pity, of the judicious part

of mankind, to see talents, knowledge, and education, of no avail to stifle in their births the deformed monsters of envy, suspicion, and revenge, which, from such trivial causes, are capable of rendering friends and brothers so very obnoxious to one another."

He had not only this altercation to contend with, however, but discord broke out amongst the "Four Kings of Brentford," and the nosegay was no longer attractive. Colman and Powell sided together, and were in array *versus* Harris and Rutherford. This dispute gave occasion to the publication of no less than four pamphlets, viz.

"A Narrative of the Rise and Progress of the Disputes subsisting between the Patentees of Covent Garden Theatre."

"A True State of the Difference subsisting between the Proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre. By George Colman and William Powell."

"The Conduct of the Four Managers of Covent Garden Theatre, freely and impartially examined, both with regard to their present Disputes and their past Management. In an Address to them, by a Frequenter of that Theatre."

"The Managers: a Comedy. As it is acted at Covent Garden."

To labour through these four pamphlets would be superfluous; a few passages known may be interesting.

"Of all the heavy charges urged by Messrs. Harris and Rutherford in their Narrative, we do not find one that stands unrefuted in Mr. Colman's 'True

State,' except the crime of having caused the play of Cymbeline to be represented to three or four full houses. If daily experience did not convince us that the most violent disputes arise from as ridiculous sources, it would excite our wonder that a difference so trivial in its cause, should be so serious in its consequences.

"Sixty thousand pounds is a sum not to be trifled with, or thrown away, without an imputation of madness or folly. We would, therefore, recommend it to all the parties, 'to send Janus his back-face home again;' and as they finished the old year with a foolish rupture, to distinguish the new one with a wise accommodation.

"It is but justice to take notice of the noble answer returned by Mr. Colman to the challenge sent him by Mr. Harris, contained in these words, amongst others: 'You are very welcome, Sir, to my life if you dare, any how, to hazard the taking of it.' The answer of Colman was, 'As to my daring to take your life, God knows I dare not do it; but you and every other man shall find that I dare, on all occasions, to defend my own.'

This Mrs. Lessingham, whosoever *rib* she might have been, certainly appears as the *bone* of contention between all parties.*

* George Ann Bellamy states in her memoirs, "Before the conclusion of the winter, the other two proprietors complained that they were made cyphers. They alleged that Mr. Colman and Mr. Powell took all the power to themselves, and were so expensive in the clothes and decorations, that they shared nothing, notwithstanding that the houses in general were crowded. When the next season commenced," she continues, "the disagreement

But there was at this period, a lover of litigation in the Theatre, in the person of Macklin; then, according to his own account sixty-eight years of age, although tradition made him nine years older.

between the patentees become public. This broke out afresh, upon account of a very strange dispute indeed, which was no other, than Mr. Colman's insisting that Mrs. Yates should appear in the character of Imogine in Cymbeline; a part in which she had been long established, and universally admired; and Messrs. Harris and Rutherford being equally strenuous that Mrs. Lessingham should have the preference. The beauty* and figure of the latter were, I allow, greatly in her favour; but she could by no means be said to surpass Mrs. Yates, who joined hard-earned science to her other great qualifications.

" A process was begun in consequence of this rupture, which tended only to benefit the gentlemen of the long robe; for in the sequel it produced no other effect."

Mrs. Bellamy informs us, that on the day of the representation of the English Merchant, Nov. 1767, she had caused an advertisement to be inserted in all the papers to the following purport, " Speedily will be published, a Letter from George Ann Bellamy to John Calcraft, Esq.," with this motto:

> " So comes the reck'ning when the banquet 's o'er,
> The dreadful reck'ning—and men smile no more."
>
> GAY.

" Just before the piece was going to begin," she writes, " Mr. Colman came into my dressing-room, and informed me, that, in consequence of my advertisement, Mr. Calcraft had been at his house vowing vengeance against the theatre, if I did not promise to give up all thought of such a publication, which he said was ' at once putting a dagger to his heart, and a pistol to his head.' He concluded, with many imprecations, that, ' if I did not at least give some time, he would not only put his threats into execution, but apply to the Lord Chamberlain to have me

* If Mrs. Bellamy allowed that Mrs. Lessingham was handsome, it may be believed that she was eminently beautiful: for eulogium on the score of personal charms from one professional lady to another, is of rare occurrence behind the scenes.

This elderly firebrand had returned from Ireland to the London boards, and brought out at Covent Garden his farce of the 'True Born Irishman,' (which had previously been produced with some

silenced.' Mr. Colman expressed some displeasure at the rudeness of Mr. Calcraft's behaviour, who departed abruptly. The manager, actuated, I doubt not, by a regard for me, used many arguments to make me give up the point: he then entreated that I would only defer the publication until the end of the season. At length, yielding to his reiterated entreaties, I gave him my promise that I would consent to his wishes." Mrs. Bellamy adds, "The rupture between the proprietors had now come to a crisis. This, as I was informed, rendered it necessary for Mr. Colman to get a paper signed by the performers, expressing their approbation of his management, and containing an acquiescence to be guided by his direction.

"This paper the manager brought to me, and desired I would sign it. Upon which I frankly told him, that as I was engaged to all four of the proprietors, it did not appear to me, at first sight, to be prudent, to sign any paper giving one a preference over the others. To which Mr. Colman replied, that, as by the articles which subsisted between him and the other proprietors, he was allowed to be the only 'acting manager,' he could see no impropriety in my signing a paper which merely related to that right. He then added, that he was so well assured I should, upon due reflection, be of his way of thinking, that he should leave the paper with me, and dine with me the next day. Mr. Colman was scarcely gone, before Mr. Rutherford and Mr. Woodward came in, and on the same business as the former, immediately exclaimed, 'have you signed it?' Upon my answering in the negative, but acknowledging that the paper was left with me for my consideration, Mr. Rutherford wanted me to show it to him. This I absolutely refused to do: saying, I wondered any gentleman who professed liberal sentiments could advise a breach of trust. He told me, that if he had got hold of it, he would have burnt it, as he was sure two capital performers had signed it, who would not have done so had another paper been presented in their favour (meaning the other proprietors). Upon which, I repeated what I had said before, adding, that I thought it, though trifling in itself, a breach of trust; and it therefore became an

success in Dublin), under the title of the 'Irish Fine Lady;' but the humour of the piece being entirely local, it met with so cold a reception, that it was withdrawn after the first night. With the

indispensable duty for me to keep it unseen. As soon as I had said this, Mr. Rutherford went away in anger. Mr. Woodward remained behind, and made use of every argument to dissuade me from signing it. He dwelt particularly on the ill-treatment I had received from Mr. Colman,—this, however, I ought to have attributed to Powell, not Colman.

"But at length, tired out with Mr. Woodward's solicitations, urged by my gratitude to him, and instigated by my usual indiscretion, I consented to his request. I accordingly sent back the paper to Mr. Colman, with a card enclosed, acquainting him that I desired to decline signing it: but hoped my refusal would not prevent me the favour of his company, agreeably to his own invitations. That gentleman, however, took no notice of my card, and from that time we became totally strangers. Thus was I once more overpersuaded, contrary to my own judgment, to pursue a measure, which, as will be seen in the sequel, turned out to be the most detrimental to my interest I could have chosen,—for on the expiration of my articles, I determined to retire to my house at Strand-on-the-Green, and wait the issue of whatever should happen. In a short time I received a visit from Mr. Cook, a gentleman belonging to a particular department of the theatre, who told me he was sorry to be the messenger of unwelcome news, but he came from Mr. Colman to inform me, that if I would accept of six pounds a week, he would engage me; if not, he should no longer look upon me as one of the company. Had Mr. Colman sent me a discharge, it would have carried with it more of that candour, by which his actions were generally guided.

"Mr. Harris called upon me, and seemed much hurt at the affair; he consoled me with the hopes of the suit being soon ended, when he assured me that I should be reinstated in my former situation.

"Some months after this, on meeting Mr. Harris, he again told me that Mr. Colman and the other proprietor were on the eve of being reconciled, and that I might depend upon being included as one of the first articles of the treaty. In a few days,

division amongst the managers of the theatre, it was in accordance with Macklin's bustling and litigious spirit to become a party embroiled, and he joined in the opposition to Colman. The consequence of this was, a paper war amongst the critics, and a more ruinous paper war amongst the proprietors, in the shape of a Chancery-suit. Macklin * got involved in this Chancery-suit, into which he entered with as much seeming spirit and alacrity, as if he had been the solicitor instead of the client. This suit continued for several years, and as Macklin always thought he understood whatever business he was engaged in better than anybody else, he undertook, himself, to answer all the bills in Chancery.

"We have seen several of Macklin's replies to these bills," says Mr. Cooke, in his memoirs of this eminent actor, "and, to do the solicitor justice, they did not disgrace the profession by an improper brevity. The causes of complaint we must confess

Mr. Harris made an appointment to meet me in London, and came a full hour before the time. I believe he would not have been displeased, had I disobeyed his summons; for the moment he came in, I could not avoid observing, from his manner of accosting me, that all was not right: nor was I deceived; for Mr. Harris was no sooner seated, than he informed me that the proprietors were reconciled, and added that he had mentioned an engagement for me; but Mr. Leake † not seconding it, as he expected, it was not to be procured, as, upon the first mention of it, Mr. Colman had declared that he would sooner see the theatre in flames and himself in the midst of it, than consent to my ever being of the company."

* See Cooke's Memoirs of Macklin.

† Mr. Leake was the purchaser of Mr. Rutherford's share of the Covent Gardan Patent.

to be numerous, and some of them very frivolous. After a wearisome contest of many years, which must have interrupted Macklin greatly in his own profession, he obtained his cause ; a victory which, taking into account his loss of time, uneasiness, &c., left him little better than an empty boast, and a fresh memorial, 'that in being too busy there is some danger.' "

Notwithstanding their disputes, the managers could not be professionally abused for bringing forward so charming a piece, in this season, as Bickerstaffe's Lionel and Clarissa; such a comedy as Goldsmith's Good-natured Man ; or, Murphy's Zenobia, which proved to be, according to the taste of the time, a most successful performance. It gave the opportunity of introducing two highly accomplished artists in new parts, Barry and Mrs. Dancer, both of whom were much applauded by the critics of the day. Bickerstaffe also added another very pleasant comic drama, called The Absent Man, adapted from Regnard's " Le Distrait."

Colman, in this season too, appears to have acquired considerable credit for the style in which he revived the play of Cymbeline ; and his alteration of Tate's adaptation of King Lear gave unusual satisfaction. The chief motive that induced Mr. Colman to become an editor of " King Lear," may be collected from the following paragraph of the advertisement prefixed to the play :

" To reconcile the catastrophe of Tate to the story of Shakspeare, was the first grand object which I proposed to myself in this alteration, think-

ing it one of the principal duties of my situation to render every drama submitted to the public as consistent and rational an entertainment as possible. In this kind of employment one person cannot do a great deal; yet if every director of the theatre will endeavour to do a little, the stage will every day be improved, and become more worthy of attention and encouragement. 'Romeo,' 'Cymbeline,' 'Every Man in his Humour,' have long been refined from the dross that hindered them from being current with the public; and I have now endeavoured to purge the tragedy of Lear of the alloy of Tate, which has so long been suffered to debase it."

After a fair comparison of Mr. Colman's labours with the original play of Shakspeare, and the alterations of Tate, we are convinced that he has accomplished much more than he professed to undertake. His transpositions of many scenes and passages of Shakspeare are as happy as his restorations, and must have demanded the most minute and attentive revisal of both the plays. There is a self-denial in these labours, diametrically opposite to the vanity and ostentation of other literary undertakings. In this case the editor retreats from applause, and the spectator is often obliged to him for adding force or grace to a passage, the merit of which is wholly ascribed to the original author. It is, therefore, with particular pleasure we seize this opportunity of giving the editor that praise which he does not demand; and we are of opinion that the tragedy of Lear, in its present form, does honour to the director of the stage whereon it is

exhibited, and must undoubtedly supersede the play of Tate; for the chief merit of Colman's edition consists in placing the merits of Shakspeare in the fairest light.

Colman also, in the season 1767-8, produced The Royal Merchant, an opera, founded on Beaumont and Fletcher, to which was prefixed the following advertisement:*

"Beaumont and Fletcher's Comedy of The Royal Merchant has ever been esteemed one of their most natural and capital productions; yet, interesting as the story is, and excellent as most parts of the writing are, it is remarkable that it seldom or never attracted the notice it seemed to deserve.

"This consideration induced the present editor to try whether it might not be rendered more generally agreeable, by the embellishment of music; and he was the rather tempted to make this experiment, from the romantic turn of the fable, and singularity of the characters in this play, which appeared to him peculiarly calculated for an opera."

During this season, for some supposed personality, Colman was assailed by an attack in the shape of "A Poetical Epistle to George Colman," from William Kenrick.

George Colman the younger says, Kenrick† seems

* Altered by Thomas Hull.

† "This author," remarks the Biographia Dramatica, "with considerable abilities, was neither happy nor successful. Few persons were ever less respected by the world, still fewer have created so many enemies, or dropped into the grave so little regretted by their contemporaries."

to have been a bilious character, repeatedly attacking men more intellectually gifted than himself, and taking Literary Bulls, such as Dr. Johnson and others, by the horns.

Kenrick wrote this epistle to show that he was greatly injured by Colman's having insinuated that there was the least resemblance between Mr. W. Kenrick and Mr. Spatter, a character in The English Merchant; a fellow whose heart, and tongue, and pen, are equally scandalous. Kenrick also addressed an Epistle to James Boswell, Esq., occasioned by his having transmitted the moral writings of Dr. Johnson, to Paschal Paoli. Kenrick's object was notoriety; but it appears that Johnson, Colman, and Boswell, disdained to answer him. He applied to Colman for some favours—a proof, after having traduced him, of his despicable character.

The following letter from Voltaire, appears to have been written on Colman presenting him, together with his other Dramas, the Play of The English Merchant, founded on Voltaire's Comedy of L'Ecossaise. With his usual *tournure* and vanity floating on the surface, he cannot help informing the author who has built upon his groundwork, of the great success of his *own* play; of its having been acted in all the theatres of Europe, from Petersburg to Bruxelles, though only composed for his private amusement, and of the admirable portrait he has drawn in it, of an original whom he never saw. The phrase of "*furieusement embelli*" is somewhat equivocal; and looks a little like a

sneer, couched in the compliments bestowed upon the English poet.

" au Chateau de Ferney par Genêve,
15° 9bre 1768.

" Si je pourrais écrire de ma main, Monsieur, je prendrais la liberté de vous remercier en anglais du present que vous me faites de vos charmantes comédies ; et si j'étais jeune je viendrais les voir jouer à Londres.

" Vous avez furieusement embelli l'Ecossaise que vous avez donnée sous le nom de Fréeport, qui est en effet le meilleur personnage de la piéce. Vous avez fait ce que je n'ai osé faire ; vous punissez votre Fréron à la fin de la comedie. J'avais quelque répugnance à faire paraître plus longtems ce polisson sur le théatre ; mais vous êtes un meilleur sherif que moi : vous voulez que justice soit rendue ; et vous avez raison.

" Lorsque je m'amusai à composer cette petite Comédie pour la faire representer sur mon théatre à Ferney, nôtre société d'acteurs et d'actrices me conseilla de mettre ce Fréron sur la scene, comme un personnage dont il n'y avoit point encore d'exemple. Je ne le connaie point—je ne le connais point. Je ne l'ai vu, mais on m'a dit que je l'avais peint trait pour trait.

" Lorsqu'on joua depuis cette piece à Paris, ce croquant était à la premiére representation ; il fut reconnu dès les premieres lignes. On ne cessa de battre des mains, de le huer, et de le bafouer ; et tout le public à la fin de la piece le reconduisit hors de la salle avec des éclats de rire. Il a eu l'avantage d'être joué et berné sur tous les théatres de l'Europe depuis Petersbourg jusqu'à Bruxelles. Il est bon de nettoier quelquefois le temple des muses de ses araignées. il me parait que vous avez aussi vos Frérons à Londres ; mais il ne sont pas si plats que les nôtres.

"Continuez, Monsieur, à enrichir le public de vos très agréables ouvrages. J'ai l'honneur d'être avec toute l'estime que vous meritez,

Monsieur,
Votre très humble et très
obéissant Serviteur
VOLTAIRE,
gentilhomme ord^re de la Chambre du Roy.

A Monsieur Monsieur Colman,
Directeur des Spectacles etc^a
à Londres.

The following remarkable instance of longevity occurred in 1768:—"December 10, 1768, died Philip Polfreman, aged nearly 100, a box-keeper at the play-house in Covent-garden; he had saved 10,000*l.*" Excellent theatrical times! the box-keeper better off than the manager!

Johnson contrived to influence the managers in the interest of his protégé, Mrs. Williams. In a letter from him to Mrs. Carter, dated Gough-square, January 14, 1756, and addressed to Colman, he says:—"I am soliciting a benefit for Miss Williams, and beg that if you can, by letters, influence any in her favour, (and who is there whom you cannot influence?) you will be pleased to patronise her on this occasion. Yet, for the time is short, and as you were not in town, I did not till this day remember that you might help us, and recollect how widely and how rapidly light is diffused."

Mrs. Anna Williams was the daughter of a Welch surgeon and physician; who, fancying he had discovered the longitude, was disappointed in his speculations, and reduced to poverty. A cataract had deprived his daughter of her sight, when she became the protégé and intimate friend of Doctor Johnson's wife. On the death of Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Williams experienced the constant humanity and protection of the Doctor. Among other acts of kindness, he procured a benefit for her, from Garrick, in the year 1756, at Drury Lane Theatre, by which she obtained two hundred pounds. She published, although blind, a translation, from the French, of the Life of the Emperor Julian, with notes; and a volume, also, of Miscellanies in prose and verse. She died at Johnson's house, in Bolt Court, aged seventy-seven years.*

"Sir, January 17, 1769.

"Since your kind promise of a benefit for Mrs. Williams, my friend, Mr. Strahan, has obtained the concurrence of all the other partners, except Mr. Powell, to whom I have written, and who delays his answer till he has consulted you: as you will not counsel him to refuse what you have yourself granted, I suppose, he will make no objection, and therefore entreat you to give us, as soon as you can, the play which you think most proper, and appoint us the day which can first be spared. You can, perhaps, give us the choice of several plays, but we know not how to choose so well as you, and therefore hope that you will contrive to make your favour as efficacious as you can.

"You will, therefore, I hope, turn this business in your

* See Hawkins's Life of Johnson, Boswell's Life of Johnson, &c.

mind, and favour me as soon as you can with your determination.

I am Sir, your most humble Servant,

Sam. Johnson."

To George Colman, Esq.

The following letters are from an individual who made an unfortunate figure in his day, Mr. Charles Lee. He was a colonel in the English army, and had previously served in Poland. He thought proper, in the famous American war, to commence fighting the battle of the colonies against the mother country. This first epistle to Colman was dated, however, nine years prior to his desertion.

" Dear Colman, Warsaw, May 8, 1769.

" You must undoubtedly think me a very extraordinary person, that, on a slender acquaintance, I should have saddled you with the curation of my affairs, and afterwards not think it worth my while to write to you even a civil note. Such as a common acquaintance, who had conferred no obligation, might have expected. The truth is I have expected every day to be ascertained of my destiny, and then intended to have given you a circumstantial plan of my operations; but as this day is as remote in all appearance as ever, I should be guilty of a monstrous neglect in any farther delaying to pay the tribute of friendship which I so sensibly owe.

" Believe, my dear Sir, that I most sincerely love and honour you, and this love and honour is founded on so solid a basis that I have dared to neglect a form which would not be pardoned by a person who is not really an object of love and esteem.

" I have been in this place two months, waiting for an opportunity to join the Russian army, and am afraid that I shall be obliged to wait a month longer, the communications

being so filled with the offals of the Confederates (who are themselves a banditti) that it is impossible to stir ten yards without an escort of Russians. The English are less secure than others, as they are esteemed the arch-enemies of the holy faith. A French comedian was the other day near being hanged from the circumstance of wearing a bob-wig, which by the Confederates is supposed to be the uniform of the English nation. I wish to God that three branches of your Legislature would take it into their heads to travel through the woods of Poland in bob wigs. The first opportunity that will offer will be the present Ambassador, who it is said will now be succeeded in ten days; but this has been so long said, that I begin to despair of any opportunity offering till the whole is over. The Turks have already got a drubbing at Chotsin. If I should not arrive till all is over I have made a wise journey of it. I believe it would break my heart, for I have an unspeakable curiosity to see this campaign, though in fact I believe it will be but a ridiculous one. If not quite like that of Harlequin and Scapin, it will resemble that of Wilkes and Talbot.* The Russians can gain nothing by beating their enemy, and the Turks are confoundedly afraid. I wish by practice to make myself a soldier for purposes honest, but which I shall not mention.

I think, after the campaign, of passing through Hungary and spending the ensuing winter in the South of Italy, Sicily, or some of the Islands in the Icarian, or Ægean Sea. You are a scholar and know where these seas are. As to England, I am resolved not to set my foot in it, till the virtue which I believe to exist in the body of the people can be put in motion. I have good reasons for it: my spirits and temper were much affected by the measures of which I was witness,—measures moderate, laudable, and virtuous in comparison of what has been transacted since. To return solemn thanks to the Crown for the

* The papers entitled the "North Briton," written by Wilkes, occasioned a duel between him and Lord Talbot.

manifestly corrupt dissipation of its enormous revenues, and an impudent demand on the public to repair this dissipation, is pushing servility farther than the rascally Senate of Tiberius was guilty of. In this light it is considered by all those with whom I converse of every nation, even those who have the least idea of the dignity of liberty. The Austrians and Russians laugh and hoot at us; in fine, it is looked upon as the consummation of human baseness—as the *coup de grace* to our freedom and national honour.

You will say it is being a pleasant correspondent, to give you my comments in what passes under your own eyes, and being entirely silent on the transactions of this country, which you may be supposed to have some curiosity to be acquainted with. You will scarcely think me serious, when I assure you that I am as totally a stranger to them as yourself, as any man in England, as my Lord Mayor Humphrey Gates I am sure must know fifty times more of the matter. I see that the country is in one general state of confusion, filled with devastation and murder. I hear every day of the Russians beating the Confederates, but as to what the Russians, what the Confederates, what the body of the nation propose, I am utterly ignorant, though no more I believe than they are themselves. Their method of carrying on war is about as gentle as ours was in America with the Shawenese and Delawares. The Confederates hang up all the Russians (generally by the feet) who fall into their clutches, and the Russians put to the sword the Confederates. The Russian Cossacks have an admirable *sang froid* in these executions. The other day at a place called Rava, forty or fifty Conservatives were condemned to the bayonet, but as they were tolerably well dressed, they were desired to strip for the ceremony, the Cossacks not choosing to make any holes in their coats. The situation of the King is really to be lamented. Notwithstanding he wears a Crown, he is an honest virtuous man, and a friend to the rights of mankind.

" I could say many things on this subject, *digna literis*

nostris, sed non committenda ejusmodi periculo, ut aut interire aut aperiri aut intercipi possint.

" I hope your kindness has not entailed any trouble upon you with respect to my affairs.* I hope Mr. Eyre has been punctual in his payment. I wrote to him from London, acquainting him with your powers. If you should pass by Mr. Hoare's, I beg you will tell him that I writ to him from Munich, requesting him to send me, if possible, a letter of credit to Warsaw, and to give credit to a Captain William Spry for surveying my lands in St. John's. How does the hallowed Juliet ? It is inconceivable how much I am interested for the success and welfare of that girl. If she does not succeed (but this is impossible) I wish you could persuade her to marry me and settle in America. My respects to Mrs. Colman, and that I am most sincerely hers. Adieu, my dear friend, *et tibi persuadeas te à me fraterne amari.*

CHARLES LEE."

" My love to Rice: when he can find time and matter I wish he would write. The best news he can send me, is that of his being married to the Princess of Wales, or any widow with vast interest and income. Are the women blind or mad, in not seizing so inestimable a prize ?

" Direct to me chez le Prince General de Podolie, Varsovie. You know Fawkner ? Ask him if he did not receive a long letter from me from this place. I am apprehensive that it has miscarried; for the posts are frequently cut off by the Confederates. Tell him from me (but this I request you will not mention to a third person,) that I hope he will not sell any land to purchase a company. He had better borrow the money ; all I can muster shall be at his service, which will go a good way. I forgot to mention this

* Affairs which were foisted upon Mr. Colman, as it is evident, from the expressions in the beginning of this letter; and he ultimately declined to communicate with Lee, considering him a dangerous correspondent, whose political principles were utterly repugnant to his own feelings.

in my letter. For God's sake make Rice procure me one of Elliot's dragoon casks; if Sir William Erskine is about town he may ask him for one in my name; it is for the King of Poland. It must be sent to Mr. Montague's in Lincoln's Inn-fields."

"My Dear Colman, Vienna, March 16, 1770.

"As I do not know who Mr. Gratton is, or how to direct to him, I must beg you will thank him for his letter. I suppose he is a person you have employed to superintend my small affairs. I dare say he is able and honest from your confidence, and I am extremely happy not only on my own account, but on your's principally, that you will be discharged from any farther trouble.* He will oblige me in desiring Mr. Hoare to send a letter of credit for me to Leghorn, as I shall certainly set out in three days for Italy. I have recovered my force in some degree, but am yet far from right; my plan is to bathe in the sea for six weeks, and then go through a course of waters at Viterbo, or some others that are recommended to me in the Upper Valois. I should have liked to embark in the Russian fleet; some days I find myself in health, spirits, and strength, sufficient to undertake it; but I am *journalier*, and on the whole, therefore, had better let it alone; but I shall regulate myself by my future feelings.

"I long to be with you in England—I mean with you, and four or five whom I sincerely love; but dread the agitations I should be thrown into by the too slow progress of public virtue. Let the hallowed Sir George Savile, honour, and the genius of England, triumph over tyranny, corruption, Grafton, North, and the devil; and I will hasten to participate the joy: or should the sword of our good angel be

* Garton was the name of the person to whom this paragraph alludes; he was Treasurer of Covent Garden Theatre, and a private agent of Mr. Colman. By his turning over Lee to this *factotum*, it would appear that he was desirous to get rid of a disagreeable correspondent.

unsheathed, my puny dagger shall contribute its mite of annoyance to the breast of despotism and wickedness. You will excuse my not delivering myself like a man of this world ;—I never can on so heating a subject.

" I wish I could muster up wit or news to entertain you, but I am unfurnished with both, unless you will consider as an article of news my being enamoured of a royal family, but I really am smitten with the reigning one of this country. The women are all divinely handsome, gracious, unaffected, and civil, without the air of protection. The Emperor will, I believe, one day make a figure, at least comparatively with the sad automata of sceptered herd. He sent for me the other day, and suffered me to converse with him for an hour, as he was curious to have a detail of the Turkish war. I was not much surprised at his having so good an idea of this, but could not help admiring his general knowledge of what has passed in America, of the geography of the country, and what is more, of the interest of Great Britain with respect to it. In short, I have heard of monarchs, who are more concerned in the subject, not quite so well acquainted with it. Since I began this letter I am told a circular letter of credit will be better, on Leghorn, Genoa, and Milan : if Mr. Gratton will inform Mr. Hoare of it, he will oblige me. If Davers is in town let him know I have received his letter, and will answer it from Venice. Ask my Lord Thanet if he has received a long letter from me. I wish you would make Rice write to me; he has time, you have none. Let him give me the politics and the progress of cuckoldom ; let him direct to me at Venice. I find by Mr. Gratton's letter Mr. Eyre has not yet paid ; he must do it. Adieu, my dear Colman,

Your's most affectionately,

C. Lee."

" My service to Mrs. Colman ; and if you see Fawkner desire he will write to me at Venice. I have sent him two letters, one to Hall, without receiving an answer."

The foregoing letters prove the restless and ungovernable spirit of General Lee. In reference to this singular character, the following notices, which do not redound to his honour or credit, appeared in the newspapers of 1777.

"Newport, Rhode Island, Jan. 5, 1777.

"'Now for news!' It is a certain truth, that General Lee is taken prisoner by Colonel Harcourt, at the head of forty light dragoons, and is now being tried by a Court Martial for desertion. I make no doubt that he will be shot; for he was a promoter of rebellion, and a disturber of the peace of mankind. He was taken by stratagem: a scouting party of the light horse met a farmer carrying despatches from him to Washington, and threatened him with the loss of life if he did not carry them to the place where Lee was, which he instantly complied with. Before they took him, I am informed he shot a cornet of the light horse.

"Several accounts have been given of the circumstances of taking General Lee, but none of them are accurate. It happened thus:—Upon the countryman's showing Colonel Harcourt the house where the General and his party was, he instantly rode up, and summoned the people in it to surrender. The answer was a volley of musquetry from behind an old wall, which gave Colonel Harcourt a slight wound, killed two of his men, and wounded others. Upon this the house was again summoned, with a threat that if they did not instantly surrender, every man in it should be put to the sword. This brought out General Lee, who fell on his knees to Colonel Harcourt, with his sword in his hand. Suddenly, however, recovering his panic, he flew into a violent rant of his having for a moment attained the supreme command. He gave many signs of wildness, and of a mind not perfectly right.

"You will hear the news of 900 Hessians being taken by the enemy by the following stratagem. A ship of ours being taken with clothing for a number of men, Lee dressed his people in their clothes. The Hessians mistook them for British troops, and were surrounded and taken, but have been since rescued by General Leslie. The surprise and defeat of the Hessian brigade (who formed the *corps de reserve*, and were posted to cover the rear) at Trentown in New Jersey, was owing entirely to their considering themselves too secure, and despising the enemy, who they imagined would never dare to attack them. General Lee, however, disguised in the habit of a peasant, reconnoitred their situation, and formed a very masterly, and (as it turned out) a very successful plan for attacking them; only 350 escaping out of 1800, leaving all their plunder behind them, which was very considerable, as they had been nearly four months in collecting it. It is added, that General Lee, a few days after the above action, was taken prisoner by a detached party of our troops, as he was reconnoitering. He was disguised in the dress of a farmer, and was discovered by a provincial deserter, who had seen him often at the camp. General Lee, at the time of his being taken, commanded an army of 9000 men, and was marching to the relief of Philadelphia.

"We are told from New York, that the Americans are coming in daily, more from interest than love. I have conversed with many. I find which way their inclination is; for I believe to a man they are fanatics in their religious principles, and republicans in their notions of government. They look upon a Briton as a hard task-master; they say that for their sins the Lord permits them to be punished by an Egyptian bondage; but they hope in his good time that he will take them into favour; and that they will rise superior to all their enemies, as they are determined, since they can do no better, to wait with patience and resignation until the time comes that they shall give laws to the whole

world; that with all their meekness and religion they don't want for ambition. For these notions they are obliged to General Lee, who told them that all the world could not conquer them if they were united. Our commander in this place is General Clinton, whom Lee had some advantage over at Carolina. What trifles buoy up little minds! He was so elated with his success, that he said he would follow Clinton to the gates of hell!

"Doubts have arisen about the capture of General Lee; but there is in reality no doubt about it, and the stroke is one of the heaviest upon the Americans which they have experienced. It is a fact that the safety of their army at Kingsbridge was entirely owing to his advice. General Washington had determined to hazard a general engagement, but Lee expostulated with him strongly upon that idea, assuring him that his whole army must infallibly be cut to pieces, and that nothing could save it; that his only business was to decamp in the night. Washington was alarmed enough to take the advice, very fortunately for them all. Had he then fought, Lee's prediction would certainly have been verified, for nothing could have saved them.

"On Monday last Mr. Charles Lee was brought to this city from Brunswick, and put into the custody of a strong guard."

"Dear Sir, New York, January 2, 1777.

"Yesterday General Lee and Colonel Robert Livinstone were brought to town from the Jerseys, and confined in the Old City Hall. They were taken in the house of Captain Richards, about a mile from Trentown. I went this morning to the City Hall to see my relation, poor Livinstone: he made my heart ache to see him weep, and lament. He said he would have made his peace agreeably to the Commissioner's proclamation some time ago, but General Lee advised him to keep his hands clear of it, as it was only a trap to kidnap people."

"DEAR FRIEND, Dover, Feb. 27, 1777.

"I am just arrived here from Paris, in an ill state of health, but hope to see you in a few days. The morning before I left Paris, advice was received there that General Howe had left New York, and had gone with the greatest part of his troops to attack Boston, and that General Lee was put on board His Majesty's ship, the Eagle; the ship on board of which Lord Howe has his flag.

"It is now confidently asserted, that General Lee is not coming over to England, but that orders are already dispatched to General Howe to try him there by martial law, first for a breach of a certain section of the articles of war in flying from his colours as an English officer, and aiding and assisting the enemy in their rebellious attack upon the King's forces."

General Lee, who must have been afflicted with a species of lunacy, was tried by a Court Martial, and suspended for a year from all his functions. He then retired from the service, and died at Philadelphia, October 2, 1782. The following extract from his will is amusing:—

"I desire most earnestly that I may not be buried in any church or church-yard, or within a mile of any Presbyterian or Anabaptist meeting-house; for since I have resided in this country I have kept so much bad company while living, that I do not choose to continue it when dead."

The following letter is from Mr. W. Smith, known subsequently as 'Gentleman Smith,' and as the actor who made it an indispensable condition in his engagements 'that his face was never to be blackened'—probably he knew that he could not act Othello; nor

was he ever 'to be lowered down a trap;' by which it would seem he was apprehensive of endangering his genteel comedy legs.

Smith had heard that death had snatched away Powell, the co-partner of Colman, Harris, and Rutherford. His feelings on this melancholy report, contrast well with the postscript of his letter:

"Dear Sir, Ipswich, June 30, 1769.

"We have a melancholy report here, of Mr. Powell's death. I hope it is not true, but should it be so, perhaps his share in the patent, or part of it, may be to be disposed of. May I ask for your advice, how to proceed in my application, in this affair? I flatter myself in thinking that you would have no reason to repent of my connection with you, and shall be much obliged to you for your assistance, and for a line directed to me at Leiston Hall, near Saxmundham, Suffolk, where I shall stay till next month.

I am, Sir,

Your very sincere, and obedient humble servant,

W. Smith.

To Geo. Colman, Esq.

"P. S.—We have had but little sport at the races, but I have been rather on the fortunate side."

George Colman the younger, records of Smith in 1820, that he had then lately died at a very advanced period of life, having retired from the stage in 1788. He was the hero of his day, *faute de mieux* perhaps, as to tragedy, in the Richards, Macbeths, Kitelys, Archers, &c.; and was the original Charles Surface, in The School for Scandal.

From Smith's restlessness as an actor, the manager seems to have had a lucky escape from him as a partner. The report of Powell's death was confirmed by the following letter to Colman, from the Rev. Sir James Stonhouse, Bart., written, as it appears, immediately after the event:

"Dear Sir, Bristol, July 3, 1769.

"I am truly concerned to acquaint you, that Mr. Powell died this evening, at seven o'clock. I write this by Mrs. Powell's desire, whose distress is very great indeed. I make no doubt of your being a friend to the widow and the fatherless, and that you will *immediately* take every prudent caution to secure them in their property, and prevent her share in the house from being sold. She will be happy in having you for her counsellor and protector."

Powell was a great loss to the stage, and his demise appears to have deeply affected a highly respectable circle of private friends. He made his first appearance at Drury Lane in 1763, in the character of Philaster, having been introduced to Mr. Garrick by his friend, Mr. Holland, two or three months before the manager went to Italy. His success was so great, that this tragedy brought crowded houses during that season. He afterwards appeared in several other characters; but for want of sufficient study and attention, his execution was not always adequate to his feelings. In 1767 he was admitted to a fourth share of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. He was also one of the managers of the new theatre at Bristol, where he went to perform with his summer company. He died, after a severe

illness, in July 1769, and was buried in the College-church there, with great funeral honours, attended by the Dean and whole choir, who sung an anthem on the mournful occasion. He was much esteemed, both as an actor and a private gentleman.

The Covent Garden property must, at this period, have been deemed a successful speculation; which is fairly to be attributed to the industry and talent of Colman; as various competitors started for the share lately held by Powell. Amongst other competitors, was Joseph Reed, Esq. This gentleman is recorded as "Reed the rope-maker." He wrote several pieces for the stage; among them the Tragedy of "Dido," by which he is best known. This play was revived for John Palmer's benefit at Drury Lane, in the year 1797. Mrs. Siddons, on this occasion, acted Dido. At the present day, we cannot pretend to judge of his merit, but as a rope-maker, *some* of his *lines* must have been much better than those we have seen.

"Sun Tavern Fields,

"Dear Sir, London, July 6, 1769.

"I most sincerely condole with you on the death of poor Powell, as I am convinced it is an incident that will greatly affect you. From some late favourable accounts of his disorder, I was in great hopes of his recovery; but as fate has determined otherwise, we must submit.

"I have this afternoon been warmly advised by a friend to endeavour to purchase the share of your deceased colleague in the property of Covent Garden Theatre; but as it is so hazardous an undertaking, I am resolved not to proceed in

the affair without your advice, nay, let me add, without your concurrence. A theatrical connexion with you were

'A consummation devoutly to be wished,'

as, from a consciousness of your integrity, and the rectitude of your management, I am convinced that it would be my inclination as well as interest to continue your fast friend and ally; but I would not even think of such a purchase, unless my being a partner in the property would be agreeable to Mr. Colman.

"As, therefore, Mr. Powell's theatrical property will, in all likelihood, be disposed of, I could wish you would favour me with your sentiments on the occasion. If I can have the preference, I should endeavour to make the bargain advantageous to Mrs. Powell, by an annuity, besides the stipulated price.

"As I have thus freely unbosomed my intention, I have only to desire of you to keep the subject of this letter a secret. I should not have made so recent an application, if I had not been assured by my friend there was no time to be lost. I am, &c. Jos. Reed.

"P.S.—I desire my best compliments to your good lady."*

Amongst the warm friends of Powell was Charles Holland, the actor, his partner in the Bristol Theatre. Charles Holland was a pupil of Garrick, under whose tuition he made some proficiency, and when that great actor left London to make the tour of Italy for his health, he became, with George Garrick, Lacy, and Powell, acting manager. He was very useful, and had great requisites for a capital performer—a

* At the end of this letter appears, as a Memorandum, in Mr. Colman's hand-writing, "No Sale."

fine appearance,a strong melodious voice, and a good understanding; in short, he was a favourite with the public, of which by industry and application he rendered himself worthy. He introduced Powell to Garrick, and, though Powell was his rival and superior, they were friends through life.

The following Prologue was written by the elder Colman, and recited by Holland, on the night appropriated to the benefit of the family of Mr. Powell, at the Theatre at Bristol.

" When fancied sorrows wake the player's art,
A short-lived anguish seizes on the heart:
Tears, real tears he sheds, feels real pain,
But, the dream vanish'd, he 's himself again.
No such relief, alas! his bosom knows,
When the sad tear from home-felt sorrow flows:
Passions cling round the soul, do all we can—
He plays no part, and can't shake off the man.
Where'er I tread, where'er I turn my eyes,
Of my lost friend new images arise.
Can I forget, that, from our earliest age,
His talents known, I led him to the stage?
Can I forget this circle in my view,
His first great pride—to be approv'd by you?
His soul, with ev'ry tender feeling bless'd,
The holy flame of gratitude possess'd.
Soft as the stream yon sacred springs impart,
The milk of human kindness warm'd his heart.
Peace, peace be with him!—May the present stage
Contend, like him, your favour to engage!
May we, like him, deserve your kindness shown;
Like him, with gratitude, that kindness own!
So shall our art pursue the noblest plan,
And each good actor prove an honest man.

The following note was addressed by Holland to Colman, on receiving this prologue :

"Dear Colman, Bristol, July 12, 1769.

"I have shed more tears over your Prologue this morning, than ever I shed over any part in my life. I do assure you it affects me so strongly, that I am apprehensive I shall not be able to give it utterance. I suppose I shall be applied to by all the printers here for a copy to print by, but shall part with none till I have your directions about it. There is a prospect of a vast house on Friday, which gives a most heartfelt pleasure to

Your much obliged humble Servant,

Cha. Holland."

Alas! Holland was as suddenly snatched from existence as his friend Powell had been. He died on the 7th of December following.

Holland was the son of a baker at Chiswick; and after having been apprenticed to a turpentine merchant in the city, whom he duly served, he applied to the managers of Drury Lane Theatre for an engagement, and under the tuition of Garrick, made considerable proficiency. The author of 'The Egotist' thus characterises Holland: "His understanding was strong, his manners were engaging, and his principles upright. Generous without parade, he was frugal without parsimony; and perfectly acquainted with the value of independence, he sensibly pursued every laudable method to obtain it. A life of rectitude was closed by a death of resignation. The being he preserved without reproach he shook off without terror, and quitted this sublunary sphere an ornament to religion, as he had filled it, an honour to society."

Foote being a legatee, as well as one of the

bearers appointed by Holland's will, attended the corpse to the family vault at Chiswick, which had a subduing effect upon his vivacity, and he was there even affected to tears. On his return to town, however, he called in at the Bedford Coffee-house, where an acquaintance questioning him as to his having been paying the last compliment to his friend Holland; he replied in the affirmative, "Yes, poor fellow! I have just seen him shoved into the family oven!"

The following letter from David Ross, in reply to one from Colman respecting an engagement at Covent Garden Theatre, is characteristic of the actor. George Colman the Younger remarks, "There is a querulous spirit running through this epistle, common to men of talent (which Ross certainly possessed), whose disappointments arise from their own neglect and improvidence." Churchill has some lines, which contain as much truth as wit, in respect to Ross's indolence and apathy as an actor:

> "Ross (a misfortune which we often meet),
> Was fast asleep at dear Statyra's feet;
> Statyra, with her hero to agree,
> Stood on her feet as fast asleep as he."

"DEAR COLMAN, Birmingham, Sept. 9, 1769.

"I received your's at Stratford, but had no opportunity of answering it then, therefore write from my first stage on bad paper, which you must excuse. The only terms I can or will accept of are these: an article for five years, this and four more, four hundred pounds for the season, and the parts I played at the theatre when I left it, if I choose to perform them. I was amazed you should think it worth your while

to think of an objection between twelve pounds and the money I ask; as you played last year it was not £.12. It is so inconsiderable, that if it was not to satisfy my vanity, I would not be sent off and called on, as occasion and necessity require. However, you are to study for yourself. I have fixed my resolution, and nothing but these terms can induce me to quit my own little farm. For my own part I had rather engage for next season than this; let a season go on to forget Mr. Powell. However, if you want my assistance, you know my terms. Write to me to Edinburgh, distinguish me, as there are a hundred with David Ross; or to the Castle Hill, that will do. I was much amazed at your mentioning Bob Bensley in opposition to me. I wish Bob well, but must say he is more indebted to your friendship than his own merit, for his situation on the stage. He should do Altamont in that play was I to cast it. I intended to get up the 'Double Dealer,' Mr. Yates, Lord Touchwood; Woodward, Brush, Shuter, Sir Paul Smith, and Bob, the 'Two Gentlemen,' 'Harry the Eighth,' 'Measure for Measure,' 'Cato,' 'Brutus,' and business that had not been seen for some years. These, with a pantomime, or a singing piece, would have been of some service. If a man is of real use, a hundred pounds is no object, much less the paltry trifle I asked, but I had my own reasons, and my own feelings, which cannot be altered; however, I am glad we saw one another, and renewed our old acquaintance. Something may start up; a mad apprentice and a mad town is always gaping for novelty. As I am now on my way, the expense and fatigue of returning would be too much for this season. I hope to be in London by the beginning of April, and will prepare my private matters to be disposed of, if you can come into my terms. If you find you don't want me, or the trifle I ask is a matter of consequence, our treaty ends, and I hope we shall ever continue as friends.

I am, dear Sir, yours sincerely,

DAVID ROSS.

"P.S.—On second thought I think it better to wait here the return of post at the Swan."

The memorandum affixed to this letter is answered "His old terms for three years."

Mr. Thomas Linley is still fresh in memory for his science in music, and his taste and genius in that composition which is produced by "the concord of sweet sounds." His private character also was most respectable, and there are some traditional anecdotes among his surviving friends relative to his pleasant manners and his *bon mots*. The daughter, of whom he writes, in the following letter, was the Miss Linley so much admired for her sweet singing and her beauty; who became the first wife of Richard Brinsley Sheridan. It seems from this letter, that the interests of the conductors of Oratorios in Covent Garden were in some sort connected then, as they are now, with those of the theatre.

"Dear Sir, Bath, Oct. 11, 1770.

"You are desirous of knowing my real sentiments in regard to my daughter's performing in London, therefore I will be as plain as I can. I think, as she has acquired a reputation, I ought to have the advantage of her first performing in London myself; and as the public rooms in London are open to me upon the same terms as to all other performers, there is a great probability that I may get more than the sum Mr. Toms * offers, by my attempt-

* Toms, the compiler of the Music for Bickerstaffe's "Love in a Village." He was employed in the musical arrangements at Covent Garden Theatre. The offer he had made to Linley is to be understood as for Colman and the other proprietors.

ing a concert on my own account, should I determine to come to London. It is contrary to my inclination that my daughter should sing at either house for the Oratorios, or any where else in London where I am not myself a principal in the undertaking; for were I properly settled in London, I think I could conduct the business of Oratorios myself, whenever an opportunity offered for me to attempt it. Therefore I do not relish the giving the prime of my daughter's performance to support the schemes of others. You desired that I would speak my mind; I do so, but you may suppose I should not choose that this should pass your own breast. Notwithstanding this, as you seem so strenuous that I should engage with them, if Mr. Toms will give me two hundred guineas, and a clear benefit, for which my daughter shall have the choice of any Oratorio that has been before performed, she shall come, otherwise I think it most to my advantage to take my chance whenever I come to London.

"In regard to engaging her as an actress, I shall never do that, unless it were to ensure to myself and family a solid settlement by being admitted to purchase a share in the patent on reasonable terms, or something adequate to this; either of which I perceive no probability of obtaining, and I shall never lay myself at the mercy of my children, especially when their very power of being of service to me depends so entirely upon chance.

"Mr. Garrick is in Bath; I have had some overtures from him, which I declined without coming to an explanation, for I never shall engage my daughter upon the stage as an actress upon any other sort of terms than those I have spoken of; and which I should not have mentioned, as you may think them impertinent, but that you requested to know my real sentiments upon this subject, which you now do, and may believe that I shall be always ready to do anything in my power to oblige you as far as is consistent with

the duty I owe to myself and family, and that I am, very respectfully, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,
THOMAS LINLEY.

"My wife and family desire their respects to Mrs. Colman and yourself. I shall be much obliged to you for a line in answer to this as soon as convenient.

"To George Colman, Esq., Great Queen Street,
Lincoln's Inn-fields, London."

Thomas Linley received his first instructions in the art he professed, from Mr. Chilcot, the organist of Bath, and appears to have had an early and uncommon aptitude for music. In due time he became a good practitioner, and was engaged as a performer in the public room of Bath, and was also extensively employed as a teacher. His daughter, Miss Linley, was born about the year 1754, and, in her infancy giving strong indications of a natural genius for music, her rising talents were very carefully fostered by her father. She received the instructions with such facility, indeed, that at twelve years of age she made her public appearance at the Bath concerts. Even in these first efforts she charmed all who listened; there was in her voice the extensive power of commanding all sounds, and every sound was harmonised by such softness that it was impossible to resist her influence. She sung to the heart; from this time, therefore, she was present at every concert, and held the station of principal singer. As years glided on, her charms expanded, and as they expanded they

mellowed. She was complimented in private and applauded in public, and it is not to be wondered at, that numerous admirers presented themselves to the notice of her father. Amongst these was a Mr. Matthews; but we suppose that he admired Miss Linley more for her professional talents, than her personal perfections, as he was at the period a married man.

There was another suitor, Mr. L. . . . .ng, a man of fortune in Bath, who made proposals that Mr. Linley could hardly find inclination to resist; but the young lady not being precisely of the same opinion with her father (few daughters are), told him, with a truly English spirit, "that if she married at all, she would marry only to be *free*."— About this time Mr. Sheridan, senior, came to Bath with his family, and here it was that Richard Brinsley Sheridan fell desperately in love with the syren. Sheridan was a friend of Matthews, and Miss Linley in her visits to the house of the latter, found frequent opportunities of seeing and conversing with the future remarkable orator and unrivalled dramatist. A mutual attachment was formed, and a marriage was conjectured to be the result; but both the fathers disapproved of the match, for Richard Brinsley Sheridan had then only to depend on (on which by the bye, he contrived to exist for very many years) his wits. Business calling old Mr. Sheridan to Ireland, the lovers seized the favourable opportunity, and eloped. They pursued their route to France, and the young lady was lodged in a convent for security, but Mr. Linley

soon discovered her place of residence, and returned with the lovers to England.

Soon after the elopement had taken place, it was buzzed about Bath, that Mr. Matthews had been privy to it, which he constantly persisted in denying, and at the same time unluckily took some improper liberties with Mr. Sheridan's name, though he was absent. Officious persons are never wanting; and on Sheridan's arrival, he was informed that Mr. Matthews had used his name disrespectfully. By the laws of honour he called him to account for this, and a duel was the consequence. The following details of the rencontre appeared at the time:

"The duel was fought in a tavern near Covent Garden, and Mr. Matthews, being disarmed, was obliged to beg his life. But this circumstance being, it seems, by the laws of honour deemed ungentlemanlike, Mr. Matthews was actually obliged to leave Bath, and to fly to Wales to forget his infamy among strangers. But scandal travels with surprising speed, and the news of the duel reached Wales almost as soon as he did himself. The tale was again revived; he was universally talked of, and shunned. In short, he found that there was but one method of regaining his reputation and his peace, and that was, by challenging Sheridan to a second combat: with this resolution he left Wales, and soon appeared in Bath. His first visit was to Sheridan, who promised to meet him. Each of them was to have a second, who was not to interfere, whatever might be the consequence. They met the

next morning about four o'clock: the first onset was fierce. Sheridan attempted to disarm his antagonist, as before, but was baffled, and obliged to close. In the struggle they fell, by which both their swords were broken. Matthews, having now greatly the advantage by pressing on him, asked the other if he would beg his life; he was answered, that he scorned it; and the contest was renewed in this awkward situation. They mangled each other for some time with their broken swords; and Sheridan having received some dangerous wounds was left on the field with few signs of life. He was conveyed to Bath, while Matthews and his second drove off to London. Thus ended an unmanly combat, which however did not prove fatal to Mr. Sheridan, for he was confined only a few weeks. During the time of his indisposition, Miss Linley was uncommonly affected by it, but she was denied the favour of visiting him, even though she begged it by the tender appellation of husband."

From this union, sprung Thomas Sheridan, who married Caroline, daughter of James Callander, Esq. (who in 1810, inherited the estates and title of Campbell of Ardkinglass, and became Sir James Campbell). Thus the beautiful Miss Linley was the grandmother of our modern beauties: the Honourable Mrs. Norton, and Lady Seymour, the "Queen of Beauty."

About this time, Macklin again offered himself and his 'Love à-la-Mode.' To this application Colman's reply is sufficiently guarded:—He had ascertained, to his cost, the person he had to deal with.

"Sir,

"If you think that I, as an actor, together with the use of the Farce of 'Love à-la-Mode,' can be of any service to Covent Garden Theatre, I am ready to treat with you about an engagement on the same footing on which other actors usually engage; or, if you could point out a manner of engaging with me more agreeable in your judgment to the interest of your theatre than this that I propose, I am ready to treat with you, and shall be obliged to you for your answer as soon as conveniency will permit.

I am, Sir,

Oct. 12th, 1770. Your humble servant,

James Street, Covent Garden. Charles Macklin.

"To George Colman, Esq."

TO MR. MACKLIN.

"Sir, October 14, 1770.

"There are, I think, many objections to an agreement with you on the same footing on which other actors usually engage. Your last agreement at our theatre was for twenty nights in one season at the rate of 20*l.* per night, and a benefit, paying the usual charge; for which you engaged to perform in 'Love à-la-Mode,' and any other pieces, and to produce two new farces, allowing for a proportionable deduction from the number of nights, in case of the failure of one or both of your new productions. I am ready to treat with you on the same terms, or to give you an answer to any other proposals, when I know the particulars.

Your humble servant,

G. Colman."

This letter proves, that although Macklin had made himself exceedingly obnoxious to the manage-

ment, he still retained a powerful share of public attraction;—witness, in those days, the salary of twenty pounds per night.

" Sir, Oct. 16, 1770.

" In answer to my proposals to you, on the 12th instant, you tell me there are many objections, you think, to an agreement with me on the same footing on which other actors usually engage. I own I am surprised at this way of thinking on a subject so very clear, as it appears to me, for your books can show that I brought to your theatre, in ten nights' acting, between four and five hundred pounds more than Mr. Powell and Mrs. Yates, in the same number of nights, though they both acted together; and I am confident that I can now bring more money than any of the performers that now belong to it, exclusive of a new pantomime, or the attraction of a new piece being added to their performance; and in that case, experience daily shows, that it is not the actor's performance that has so much the power of filling the house, as the novelty that is added to it. Now, Sir, this advantage of novelty, which can be had only at a great expense, my performance will not need, as I can, from acting in the plays in ordinary use, and from my own resource as a writer, produce more money to a theatre on the nights I act, than any other actor or actors, or performers of any kind whatever that can now be hired in England. This assertion is not from vanity, but from fair argument, drawn from experience, and which is demonstrable to a moral certainty. But to prove that I speak as I think, I will urge an argument that can admit of no doubt—I will give 180*l.* for the house for as many nights as we shall agree upon for me to act, which I think is more than any other performance can now produce at Covent Garden Theatre. Now Sir, this being a fair state of my case as to my utility, I must confess that I am at a loss to find out a

single objection against your agreeing with me on the same footing on which other actors usually engage. I wish you had thought it proper to have particularised your objections, for then I might have answered them; or perhaps they might have been removed; or at least so adjusted as to have brought about an agreement to our mutual satisfaction; and for these reasons I shall take it as a favour if you will let me see your objections on paper, or say precisely whether or no you will agree with me on the same footing on which other actors usually engage. For, if you have already determined on that point in the negative, no reasoning of any advantage whatever to your theatre from my being admitted into it on that footing, can have any weight with you; therefore I think a precise declaration on that point is necessary to prevent any further trouble about it; for as that is the mode of agreement I choose, I should be glad to have it settled one way or the other, before I speak upon any other point.

I am Sir, your humble servant,
CHARLES MACKLIN.

"I must apologise for not answering your letter sooner, but other extraordinary business engrossed both my time and attention, which prevented me.

"To George Colman, Esq.,
Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields."

In March 1771, Mr. William Kenrick, already mentioned as having scurrilously attacked Colman, made an application to the manager to use his influence to procure the representation of an opera, at Covent Garden Theatre. The opera alluded to

was possibly "The Lady of the Manor," taken from Johnson's "Country Lasses*."

"SIR,

"As my only motive for writing for the stage is profit, you rightly judge that the delay hinted at in your letter will be extremely inconvenient; as even the greater importance of my other pursuits renders the aid of my literary gains altogether necessary. This is so particularly the case at present, that I could have been content never to trouble the theatre with any production of mine again, had it been practicable to get on my opera with any success this or next season. The disappointment, therefore, is the more sensible, as I have many reasons against offering it to the other house, had I time or inclination to waste it on such application. If you have an opinion good enough of the piece as to think it worth any thing at present, as my future avocations in life will in all probability be of a very different turn, I would be glad to give up my right and title to it, for a very trifle more than a song. Otherwise I must leave it to time and chance, as an unfortunate offspring turned adrift for want of abilities in its parent to support it. I should have waited on you myself, were I not confined to my room by indisposition; as soon as I go out, I will do myself that pleasure.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient humble servant,
W. KENRICK.

Warwick Street, Golden Square."

To which letter Colman thus replied:

"SIR,

"I am extremely sorry to find that the unavoidable

* In a "Prologue to the Critics," 1779, these lines occur:—

"Kenrick perverting injured Johnson's text,
His sense confused—his simple plot perplex'd."

delay is likely to prove so inconvenient to you, and should be still more concerned if it induced you to forego any advantages to which you might otherwise be entitled; but it is not in my power to arrange matters in any other manner than as I mentioned in my last, nor would I on any consideration be instrumental to your waving those advantages on the terms which you offer.

I am Sir, &c.

25 March 1771.
To Mr. Kenrick."

In 1770 and 1771, Kenrick, who had been a mathematical instrument-maker, or as others have said, a scale-maker, published two works on his pretended discovery of the perpetual motion. Fancying that he had certainly discovered this grand desideratum, he was in 1774 alarmed by the Literary Property Bill. He addressed the artists and manufacturers of Great Britain respecting an application to Parliament for ascertaining the right of property in new discoveries and inventions; but nothing more transpired on the subject. He thus again writes to Colman:—

"Charles Street, St. James's Square.

"Mr. Kenrick presents his compliments to Mr. Colman, and requests his acceptance of a printed copy of his lecture.*

* The printed copy he alludes to, was a Lecture on the Perpetual Motion, of which the first part was printed early in 1771, with a very angry letter to the professed philosophical critics, whom he accuses of incapacity and ignorance, for presuming to question the merit of his performance. One of the Reviews thus characterises it:—

"His lecture appears to us one vast profound, too dull to entertain; and too confused to be intelligible. There is a nonsense that will make us laugh, and another that will make us melancholy; Mr. Kenrick's seems to be of the latter species, and the

Has been confined at home by the gout, or should have waited on Mr. Colman about settling the parts of his opera, for the better guide of the composers. Is obliged to Mr. Colman for the hints he was pleased to give him, of which he has taken care to profit, as Mr. Colman intended, and will do himself the pleasure of waiting on him in a few days."

Kenrick's constitution was so much injured by inebriety, that, towards the close of his life, he generally wrote with a bottle of brandy at his elbow, which at length terminated his career, June 10, 1779; less lamented than perhaps any known person in the literary world, although he possessed talents which might have procured him an honourable distinction among the authors of his time.

From this unhappily tempered person, let us turn to one who was always remarkable for cheerfulness, Mrs. Catherine Clive:

" First, giggling, plotting chambermaids arrive,
Hoydens and romps, led on by Gen'ral *Clive*.
In spite of outward blemishes she shone,
For humour famed, and humour all her own."

drudgery of reading him should be avoided with a double degree of care, as it can only be attended by mortification. We cannot dismiss this self-applauding writer without remarking the impropriety of his anathema against reviewers in general: he himself having been an anonymous reviewer. He is the most notorious literary pirate at present in this kingdom, and not only boasts of labouring in his vocation, like the highwayman he mentions, but thinks it warrantable to stab the reputation of every author whom he pillages for bread. Mr. Kenrick is, therefore, unpardonably presumptuous, in complaining of critical severity; and, in the language of the proverb, should be tender of assaulting his neighbour's house, when his own is so unfortunately made of glass."

The following letter was addressed to Colman, at Richmond, on the death of Mrs. Colman. Mrs. Clive had retired from the stage ten or eleven years before this period, to a charming residence, near the banks of the Thames, belonging to Horace Walpole, and adjacent to his villa at Strawberry Hill. We give the letter exactly as it is spelt and punctuated.

" Sir, Twickenham, April 12, 1771.

" I hope you heard, that I sent my servant to town to inquire hou you did; indeed I have been greatly surprisd and sincerly concernd for your unexpected distress; there is nothing can be said upon these melancholy occations to a person of understanding. Fools can not feel people of sence must, and will, and when they have sank their spirits till they are ill, will find that nothing but submission can give any consolation to inevitable missfortunes.

" I shall be extreamly glad to see you, and think it wond be very right if you wond come and dine hear two or three days in a week, it will change the sceen, and by the sincerity of your wellcome you may fancy your self at home.

I am, dear Sir,

Your obliged hum. Servant,

C. Clive."

By the following letter it would appear that " Gentleman Smith" was anxious about his re-engagement at Covent Garden Theatre:

" Beaufort Buildings, May 22, 1771.

" Dear Sir,

" I think I told you, when I saw you last, that I was under a necessity of determining my engagements very shortly. I am now reduced to give a positive answer in four days. If it does not suit you to come to a conclusion with me in that time, I shall be obliged to accept of an offer in

another place. As I have wished to give you the preference, I hope you will do me justice of acquitting me, of either hurrying you, or dealing with you in an underhand or disrespectful manner. I cannot accept of other terms than those I proposed to you, so would not take up your time improperly.

I am, Sir,
Your very sincere and obedient humble Servant,
WILLIAM SMITH."

To which Colman thus replied:

"DEAR SIR, Great Queen Street, May 23, 1771.

"Last night I received your favour of yesterday, wherein you tell me that you cannot accept of other terms than those you proposed to me. The terms you proposed were an advance of nearly five pounds per weeks in your salary! a demand with which it is not in my power to comply. Still, however, I wish you to continue at Covent Garden, and am, Sir, &c."

James Love, an actor at Drury Lane, by whom the annexed respectful letter was addressed to Colman, had acquired a good deal of reputation in the difficult character of Falstaff, but was too apt to smack of the fat knight when he performed other parts. His real name was Dance, and his father was the architect of the Mansion-house. He built a new theatre at Richmond, for which he obtained a licence from the Lord Chamberlain, and was at the period referred to in the subjoined letter, the only country manager who was honoured with that distinction.

"DEAR SIR, Richmond, June 7, 1771.

"Many times have I experienced your favours, of which I think I know myself well enough to be sure, I never shall

be unmindful; but that you may be fully convinced of what no doubt you have often observed, that beggars are never to be satisfied, I am bold enough to acquaint you that I have set my heart upon your granting me a further instance of your kindness and condescension.

"That this request comes late, permit me to say I have substantial witness, was merely owing to my being over-persuaded that you would treat the matter with contempt and unworthy of your acceptance. But some gentlemen whom I know to be your sincere friends and well wishers have since taught me to hope the contrary, and emboldened me to entreat that you will accept the freedom of the Richmond Theatre, and honour me with your patronage and protection.

"Depend upon it, dear Sir, you will exceedingly delight a person who has an unfeigned respect for you, by stooping to receive, as it is meant, this trifling instance of his gratitude. The obligation must ever rest upon my side, as it is impossible, in the confined state of our little theatre, that your expense of time can be fully recompensed.

I am, dear Sir,

Your much obliged and most obedient humble Servant,

JAMES LOVE.

"P. S.—I have ordered a proper medal to be prepared for your use."

To this communication Colman returned the following answer.

"DEAR SIR, London, June 10, 1771.

"Having left town before the post came in, on Saturday, it has not been in my power to acknowledge the receipt of your obliging favour of the 7th instant sooner. I accept your offer in the same spirit of cordiality and good neighbourhood with which I trust it is made, and shall be always happy to prove myself a friend and well-wisher to you, and to the Richmond Theatre. Yours, &c."

CHAPTER VIII.

1771—73.

Powell's Epitaph—Dispute with Prebendary, Dr. Elmer—Colman, and the Dean of Bristol—A fall from the Gallery—Covent Garden Proprietors reconciled—Arthur Murphy—Mrs. Hartley—Smith—Ross—William O'Brien—Cross Purposes—King—Woodward—Salaries of Performers—Oliver Goldsmith—She Stoops to Conquer—Quick—Foote's Puppet-show—Macklin's Parental feelings—John Macklin—Strange Duel—Correspondence between Colman and Smith—Covent Garden Theatrical Fund—Mr. Wroughton.

THE friends of Mr. Powell having resolved that a monument should be erected to his memory at Bristol, the pen of his friend and partner, Colman, was put in requisition to supply an Epitaph.

The monument represents Fame, holding a medallion with a profile of Powell, over which is the following inscription :—

WILLIAM POWELL, ESQ.
One of the Patentees of the Theatre Royal Covent Garden,
Died the 3rd of July, 1769,
Aged Thirty-nine years,
His Widow caused this Monument to be erected, as well to perpetuate his memory, as her own irretrievable loss of the best of Husbands, Fathers, and Friends.

Beneath the above figure are the following lines by Colman:

> Bristol! to worth and genius ever just,
> To thee our Powell's dear remains we trust;
> Soft as the stream thy sacred springs impart,
> The milk of human kindness warm'd his heart,
> That heart which ev'ry tender feeling knew,
> The soil where pity, love, and friendship grew,
> Oh! let a faithful friend with grief sincere
> Inscribe his tomb, and drop the heart-felt tear,
> Here rest his praise, here found his noblest fame!—
> All else a bubble, or an empty name.

This epitaph seems to have roused the wrath of the Prebendary, Dr. Elmer, for Colman received the following official letter on the subject:

"Sir, Bristol, Oct. 24, 1771.

"I am desired by Doctor Elmer, the Prebendary now in office at Bristol, to acquaint you that the two last lines inscribed by you to the memory of the late Mr. Powell have given much offence to himself and many others. He insists on their being struck out before he leaves this place; or he will have the monument taken down. You will do me the favour to excuse this liberty, for by his express orders I am directed to stop my men from going on with their work. Doctor Elmer lives in the College Green.

I am, Sir, your very humble Servant,

James Paine."

"N. B.—The Doctor said I was to acquaint you that the lines to which he objected were nonsense, or something worse.

George Colman, Esq. in the Great Piazza,
Covent Garden, London."

Could Dr. Elmer possibly conceive that religion was implied to be a bubble, because it is not specifically mentioned, in the above epitaph, among Powell's virtues? Colman thought the Doctor essentially in the wrong, and therefore addressed the following letter to him to Bristol:

"Sir,

"The Dean of Bristol, having granted his permission for putting up a monument to the memory of the late Mr. Powell, I have been exceedingly surprised at the receipt of a letter from the statuary, Mr. Paine, written (as he pretends) by your direction, and telling me that 'the inscription has given great offence to you and many others, the two last lines being nonsense, or something worse.' If they are not nonsense I am afraid they are at least obscure, having rendered my meaning, which I thought obvious, so liable to misinterpretation. Such as they are, however, they must stand or fall with the rest, for I am resolved to give them no correction or alteration, though ever so minute, lest I should appear to plead guilty to the charge of having intended something worse than nonsense. Benevolence and Christian charity are virtues which religion is able to plant in the most barren soil, as well as to cultivate and improve in the richest. Every other pretence to merit I have considered as an empty claim, and for these virtues only have I celebrated my departed friend; purposely avoiding the slightest commendation of his great excellence in his profession. In this light the lines have been generally understood in London; and, even after the severe strictures on them at Bristol, I am still utterly at a loss to comprehend how they could possibly give offence, or be misconstrued.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

G. Colman."

Covent Garden, Oct. 28, 1771.

We are to presume that this spirited remonstrance removed Doctor Elmer's objections. The interference, however, was made public, and animadversions thereon were published in the newspapers, as will appear from the following note from the Dean of Bristol, to Colman, dated St. Andrew's, Saturday night, November 16, 1771.

"The Dean of Bristol's compliments wait on Mr. Colman, and acquaints him, that in the Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser, of November 15, are two paragraphs, equally abusive of Mr. Colman and the Dean. The card, in the Dean's name, is a lie, from the beginning to the end. He wishes to see Mr. Colman, to consult what steps are proper to be taken to find out the author, or to punish the printer for the lies he has published."

On Tuesday, October 22, 1771, Macklin was announced at Covent Garden Theatre to perform Shylock. On this occasion one J. Ferguson, a printer, being foremost in the rush to the upper gallery, ran with such force over the seats to get into the first row that he fell over into the pit, and in his fall came in contact with one of the glass chandeliers, which descended with him, and was shattered to fragments. Ferguson seemed much hurt; his thigh and three of his ribs being considered as broken. He was carried home and medical aid applied. On the 29th, Ferguson was so far recovered as to be able to walk, for no limbs had been broken, and on the 20th of November he addressed the following letter to Colman, expressing his thankfulness for his humane attention to him.

"SIR,

"I have been several times at your house, but have not been able to find you at home. I have, therefore, to avoid the slightest imputation of ingratitude, to the man who has been so instrumental in the preservation of my life, taken this method of returning you my most sincere and hearty thanks for your generous care and humanity at my late unhappy fall into the pit at your theatre, and during my illness, and at the same time to assure you of my sorrow at the destruction of the glass chandelier by that accident.

"With a due sense of your benevolence, I pray God for the preservation of your health, and that your endeavours to please the town may exceed your most sanguine expectations, I remain,

Kind Sir,

Your much obliged, and most obedient Servant,

J. FERGUSON.

St. Martin's Lane.

P.S.—I am now so well recovered as to be able to attend my business as usual."

A similar instance of a man falling from the upper gallery into the pit occurred on February 6, 1739, when Rich was manager of Covent Garden Theatre. This accident, however, was attended with worse consequences than that related above, for the poor fellow had a broken limb, and was otherwise greatly injured. Rich paid all the expenses, and generously administered every possible assistance. On his re-recovery, the man waited on Mr. Rich, to thank him for his humane conduct, when the manager, pleased with the sufferer's gratitude, told him "he was welcome to the freedom of the pit, as long as he lived, provided he would never think of coming into it in that manner again."

In the month of November of this year, the unfortunate differences between the managers of Covent Garden were settled. They met together without the interposition of any other person, shook hands, dined at Mr. Colman's and put a final stop to all proceedings at law.

On Nov. 30, 1771, Mr. Colman was suddenly seized with a fit in Covent Garden Theatre, but in a few days was pronounced by his physicians, to be out of danger.

The following letter to Colman, is from the celebrated Arthur Murphy, Barrister, Commissioner of Bankrupts, actor, and dramatist. There is no document to designate the particular pieces to which this letter alludes, but as the tragedy of "The Grecian Daughter" was produced at Drury Lane, February 26th, 1772, it is probable that drama was one, when Mrs. Barry was the original representative of Euphrasia.

"Dear Sir,

"I am now with Mrs. Hartley, and think a great deal better of her notions of the part than I ever did before. What can I say decisively as to the main question, which is, shall the play be done or not?—I have not determined with the people of Drury Lane; in all probability, to-morrow will settle that matter. Should it be resolved to go on in the business of the comedy, it then will be for the 24th of January, or as near that day as possible. I cannot ask Mr. Garrick to alter the arrangement he has made with other authors. This brings us again to the same difficulty I mentioned this morning. If I am to be engaged in the rehearsal of a play at one house, the nature of the thing makes it impossible to attend another house. Mr. Harris

told me you meant to bring out the tragedy in January; in these circumstances that becomes impossible. I do not ask you, no more than I do Mr. Garrick, to alter your plan of business; but if both plans are proposed to subsist at the same time, then the tragedy must be postponed. Of this I am clear, that if it stood over to another year, it would be better than running any risk now, by adventuring it in too much hurry. For Mrs. Hartley, I will say, that study and leisure will, in my judgment, do great things for her. If this leaves you more in suspense than you were before, *davus sum non Œdipus.*

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

Friday night. ARTHUR MURPHY."

"I forgot to-morrow morning; it falls out very unluckily that I cannot breakfast with you. I wish I could; but since I wrote to you to-day, notice came in to attend a Commission of Bankrupts at nine in the morning; that carries me to Guildhall, and when I shall get away the Lord knows."

Among Colman's correspondence about this time, we find the following letter from "Gentleman Smith."

"Leiston Hall, near Saxmundham, Suffolk,

"DEAR SIR, August 8th, 1772.

"I received your favour this morning. Your genteel manner of complying with my last proposal has much obliged me. I am doubly happy that this affair is finished, for I am persuaded your partners would have triumphed in our separation, as they bear me no good will for (what they call) deserting a cause,* which in fact I never espoused.

* This alludes to misunderstandings between the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, which were subjects for legal decision, but which, it has been shown, were amicably arranged.

"In answer to the business you mentioned, I should have no objection to Mosca, had I not been in possession of the part of Volpone for these five years, and rehearsed it twenty times while Woodward was in the Company. As you have sent it to Mr. Ross, I could wish to be out of the play, and instead of Mosca, employed in a longer part in the Epicœne, which I hear is much improved under your hand.

W. Smith."

The genteel compliance with Smith's proposal alluded to in the above letter, was Colman's raising his salary from twelve pounds to twelve guineas. Imagine in these days, Mr. Macready soliciting an additional twelve shillings per week!

Another little specimen of petty petulance occurs in the following letter from David Ross, who objects to the part sent to him, and wants that which Smith refuses.

"Dear Sir, August 1772.

"You are as unkind in the country as in town; for, though I have called several times at Bath House, you have never been kind enough to look in upon us. Mrs. Ross has often asked you, though you have never invited her to see your beautiful spot; she begs to be remembered to you.

"You have sent me a part, that upon my soul I don't know what to do with it. It is quite out of my way; I could as soon undertake Lady Betty Modish. If I could make anything of it, I would most cheerfully undertake it. The play was cast some years ago at Covent Garden Theatre. I was then to do Mosca, and Woodward Volpone, though, if I may venture to give my opinion, it is not worth your attention, as it

never did any thing in Quin's time. I shall be glad to see you on the subject, if I knew where I could meet you.

I remain, with much esteem,

Your's

Tuesday, noon. D. Ross."

To George Colman, Esq., Richmond.

In a letter dated January 4, 1774, Ross, who professed himself hurt with the treatment he had met with from Colman, implored Garrick for an opportunity to stand before the public, under his judgment, for one year only. "It is in your power," he writes, "to be of the greatest service to me, by rescuing me from my present situation, which that ungrateful fellow Colman has put me in, by giving the preference to a man (Robert Bensley), who, in my opinion, never spoke one line naturally in his whole life."

Garrick's answer, on the following day, which implied that all his engagements for the next season were complete, appears to have been sent unsealed, and Ross complained that this was intended as an affront, that Garrick's servant and his own might know he had been refused an engagement at Drury Lane Theatre. A subsequent letter of Garrick, dated February 13th, evinces, that something of a sleight was purposed, owing to an undischarged bond to Garrick and Lacy, and Ross's prior engagement to Colman, who is designated 'Another Manager.'

William O'Brien, from whom the next epistle proceeds, made his first appearance at Drury Lane Theatre in the year 1758, in the part of Captain Brazen, and in characters of that class he arrived at

a high degree of reputation. After continuing on the stage about six years, however, he withdrew altogether from theatrical life. O'Brien was well descended, and married into a noble family. Of his two dramas, the farce of Cross Purposes, reduced to one Act, remained for many years as a stock piece; his comedy, entitled The Duel, was unsuccessful.

"My Dear Sir, Winterston, Aug. 31, 1772.

"After having exhausted all my ideas upon the subject, I return you my Farce, christened as you suggested. The title of 'Cross Purposes' is a much better one than the first, and you relieved me from an anxiety by it, which I cannot express. I have also taken your advice, and cut it into two acts, at the place you proposed; I hope you will think as well of it as before. I had written a scene between Grub and his wife to conclude the first act, but as it was of the altercative kind, I, upon reading the whole, thought it better to leave it as it is. You will find some additions sprinkled through it, and those I leave, as I do indeed the whole, entirely at your mercy. Do with it as you please; you will find that I have not made many omissions, and shall I tell you why? I must frankly own to you that my feelings upon it are so many and so various, that I cannot trust myself. Sometimes, I am so palled with it, that I think it sad stuff, and at other times, I am so pleased with it, that I cannot help thinking every word in its place, and important in the highest degree; this may be very ridiculous, but it is very true—*veræ voces eliciuntur pectore ab imo.* Perhaps you may have felt something like this yourself.

"I think that many cuts need not be made, until it comes into rehearsal, as often what reads but indifferently, will come pleasingly enough from the mouth of a judicious actor; besides that, I think it rather short as it is, for two

acts, though I may be mistaken, and indeed it had much better be thought too short, than too dull, for representation. If you can prevail upon Mr. Woodward to take Chapeau, I think it would be of great service to the piece; it is not so worthy of him as I could wish, but I think, with his acting, must have a very good effect, provided he does not drawl so abominably, as he too often does. He ought to be made a very good figure, with a great deal of hair, in paper, turned up behind, with a large comb, maccaroni waistcoat, and powdering short jacket, and slippers down at heel. As to the resemblance to High Life, I can only say that as the humour of the whole does not turn upon it, it ought not to have weight, as this is the best way of making use of servants; and if you will draw them, as they are, you will find them frequently resembling each other. Dyer, I think, I mentioned for the other, whose name I have changed, as I recollect, to Dapper, somewhere or other—Transfer, I think, better changed for Consol. Yates, I think, will support Grub well, as his testy petulant manner is so peculiar to himself. Mrs. Green should be dressed vulgarly and ridiculously genteel:—in my opinion the ladies on the stage do not sufficiently consider the truth of character in that respect. The Housemaid you will give to anybody you think can be *naïve* and simple enough to say her little with the insignificant manner that belongs to it. The three brothers' persons should be contrasted—the eldest most sturdy and swarthy, to answer his description, and the second fair. I hope you will do me the honour to write a few lines to usher me to the town, and mention this as being my first attempt, after what flourish you please. I beg you will let me know when you put it into rehearsal, that I may see one or two of the most perfect, as I am sure I shall be in such a fidget, I shall not be able to resist coming to see my fate. I can easily go from your house into some of the boxes, without being noticed; besides,

choosing to avoid the *dicier hic est** in case of a disappointment, I am afraid of giving offence to my best friend, Lady Ilchester, who is the best woman in the world, but very religious, and prejudiced in many particulars.

"I take an opportunity of some things going to town to-morrow to Lord Ilchester's, to send the manuscript there, where it shall be ordered for delivery to the person who comes for it from Mr. Colman.

I am, my dear Sir, with the greatest regard,
Your most obedient servant,
Wm. O'Brien."

'Gentleman Smith,' in the following note to Colman, again appears with a new case of grumble.

"Sir, Friday, Oct. 30, 1772.

"Since we parted, I have most impartially stated our case to a very sensible friend, who is clearly of opinion, that unless you mean dishonourably, you cannot hesitate in giving me your answer: nevertheless, you shall not be distressed for your play to-morrow.†

I am, your very humble servant,
W. Smith.

To Geo. Colman, Esq."

To which Colman thus instantly replied.

"Sir, Covent Garden, Oct. 30, 1772.

"To be charged with meaning dishonourably, for that is your expression, by one who has departed from his agreement, while I have religiously adhered to mine, is pleasant indeed. Why do you fear my impartiality in

* '*At pulchrum est digito monstrari, et dicier hic est.*'
Persius, Sat. 1.

† This appears to allude to his performance of Athelwold, in Colman's alteration of Mason's Elfrida.

stating this case to your friends? If you proceed as you have threatened, I have no doubt, where the dishonour will begin."

Smith's case referred to a rise of salary, equal to Woodward's, who had been engaged the year before. King, in the following month, required from Garrick sixteen pounds ten shillings per week, or 500 guineas per annum, which salary Woodward then received from the managers of Covent Garden: at the same time, he asserted, that Smith had in the preceding season much more than himself. Garrick, in reply, thought King had demanded too much from the managers, and stated that Woodward, he had heard, had no certainty; and Smith, though he played Kitely better than himself, had the same salary as King, *viz.*, twelve pounds per week; Garrick, however, offered to make it fifteen pounds. King's answer affirms that Woodward had 500 guineas certain; that he received at the Treasury the sixteen pounds ten shillings weekly, and paid while he belonged to it, at that rate to the Covent Garden Theatrical Fund. He adds, "Smith had the same salary I used to have, until the beginning of last season, when he demanded one equal to Woodward: this was refused, but they added to his former salary, how much I cannot positively say."

After the quarrel between Garrick and Colman, upon the latter becoming a proprietor of Covent Garden Theatre, Colman and his partner were not particular as to the means of securing the

public favourites for their establishment. King, in a letter, dated Islington, Nov. 3, 1772, urged as a reason for Garrick's raising his salary to 500 guineas per annum, the fact, "that about three days after he had made, and before he had signed, his last engagement with the Managers of Drury Lane, he had dined in company with Colman and Powell, who had tempted him to enlist under their banner: and after various arguments, was offered by them five hundred pounds to sign the same sort of article with them, which he had agreed to sign with the Managers of Drury Lane; but had replied in the negative. This was a thunder-stroke to Garrick, who, in his reply, Nov. 6th, intimates, "you have mentioned a most iniquitous offer of Mr. Colman, when he knew you were engaged: with your leave, I will speak my mind to him on the subject."

Smith, a few days after, put his pen to paper again, in reply to some remarks from Colman.

"Dear Sir, Beaufort Buildings.

"You or I, or both of us, are unluckily apt to misunderstand one another, and what has been meant well has been misinterpreted. This is certainly the case with regard to my last, which was literally designed to make every thing as easy to you as my ill state of health would admit of. I had a message from Mr. Younger on Wednesday night, that you were resolved on having Jane Shore, on Friday, at all events; and if I was not well enough to play Hastings, you would have done it without me. Well knowing that performers are not ready to play a part on such occasions, and resign it again, I made an offer of giving it up; thus what I meant, for your ease, is turned to my disadvantage; and what was meant for my own, you tell me is beneath me;

which was my declaring, I was sorry you could not accomplish getting a Hastings. I solemnly declare I had neither a vain, nor an invidious meaning in it, which you are pleased to charge me with. If I recollect, my strain, at least part of it, was civil, where I acknowledged, as I ever shall, your readiness to oblige me, when I have wished to be excused from business. This alone ought to prevent me from writing in an improper strain, and I intended it should; neither can I recollect giving any hint that your inquiries could give offence. Indeed, I did not expect any, never having as yet been honoured with them; but I had gone to Salt Hill, where no inquiries but by post could reach me, nor could I think them necessary, being determined to return to town, the moment I was well enough to attend a rehearsal. One thing you must give me leave to add, which was an idea that you might have another Hastings in view, as my name was not advertised at the time that Mrs. Hartley's was; a compliment, which at Drury Lane, is never refused a capital performer, but this you are to judge of, and determine. I really should not have mentioned this, had you not hurt me by putting a wrong construction upon what I never meant should offend you, and I am really sorry it ever did.

I am, though not quite well, ready to perform to-morrow.

Your most humble servant,

W. Smith."

In reference to the state of the drama about this period, it is not a little remarkable that the subjoined opinions of a writer in the public press (Jan. 1773), should so exactly coincide with remarks which would appear in 1840. The disappointed dramatic author of sixty-seven years ago, uses nearly the same language, as his "rejected" descendant of the present day.

"It is perhaps no news to our readers, that our theatres have been very dull lately. Drury Lane has fed upon a new pantomime, and Covent Garden upon an old one.

"We will not spend many words about it; but we affirm, that since the first existence of the theatre in Britain (unless indeed at that infant period when the theatre and the church were synonymous) it did not stand upon so despicable an establishment as at present. It is not necessary to recur for comparisons to the golden times of Elizabeth: the last age is sufficient. The brilliant example which the age of Anne transmitted to us is clouded with phlegmatic sentiment and cold reasoning: a kind of Gallic mist has extinguished every ray of genuine wit and playful humour. Where is now the exuberant wit of Wycherly? the random and plenteous vein of Congreve? or the elegant liveliness of Farquhar?—These expired with the possessors of them.

"We are told, and we know it to be true, that the managers of our theatres damp the ardour of rising genius by unfair and unworthy dealings; that they extinguish the youthful flame, by indulging in themselves a mean partiality for avarice and self-interest. They will not, we believe, deny, that they have suppressed many an excellent performance, to make room for their own pieces, either translated from the French, or altered from Shakspeare or Johnson. By this practice of unseasonable economy they receive into their coffers a double return of profit, and the town is bilked of original entertainment, as the poet is of his dinner. Many a precious morsel of

sterling genius has fallen a sacrifice to this inhuman custom of vamping up old pieces. It is but brushing off the cobwebs of antiquity; and throwing over it a sprinkling of the modern gusto. The many-headed monster of the pit is at best but a dull animal, and will not perceive the cheat; and the manager will pocket with peace all the profits of an original drama. We could name on this occasion a gentleman of reputation and abilities, whose production has lain dormant in the manager's cabinet for a great number of years; because, perhaps, a weak translated tragedy, a sentimental comedy, or a pantomime, have been hoisted unfairly over the shoulders of original but neglected genius. Such is the conduct that disgraces the dramatic character of this age; and it is impossible that the foul stain can be washed clean, while the character of the managers is swayed by illiberality and prejudice. To these causes we impute the visible decline of the British stage."

The next epistle is from Oliver Goldsmith, a name dear to all lovers of English literature. What must be conjectured of the public taste of the day, when Colman, himself a comic writer, and theatrical manager, should have had so unfavourable an opinion of the excellent comedy of She Stoops to Conquer, as to predict its condemnation even after it was in rehearsal. She Stoops to Conquer was pressed on Colman, by the friends of the author, Alas! that such a genius as Goldsmith should ever have written the annexed application!

"Dear Sir, February 1773.

"I entreat you will relieve me from that state of suspense in which I have been kept for a long time. Whatever objections you have made, or shall make, to my play, I will endeavour to remove, and not argue about them. To bring in any new judges, either of its merit or faults, I can never submit. Upon a former occasion, when my other play was before Mr. Garrick, he offered to bring me before Mr. Whitehead's tribunal,* but I refused the proposal with indignation; I hope I shall not experience as hard treatment from you, as from him. I have, as you know, a large sum of money to make up shortly; by accepting my play, I can readily satisfy my creditor, that way; at any rate I must look about to some certainty to be prepared. For God's sake take the play and let us make the best of it, and let me have the same measure at least, which you have given as bad plays as mine.

I am your friend,

and servant,

Oliver Goldsmith."

To George Colman, Esq.

The comedy was produced on March 15, 1773, with unbounded success. After the public had roared with laughter at it, Dr. Johnson gives this opinion of it: "That he knew no comedy for many years that had so much exhilarated an audience; that had answered so much the great end of comedy; making an audience merry." Struck to the heart by the critical forebodings, and by the chilling recep-

* Mr. Whitehead held the office of reader to Drury Lane Theatre at the period. The play referred to was "The Good-natured man."

tion of his play on the part of the manager, whilst his wit and invention were delighting many hundreds in the theatre, poor Goldsmith wandered he knew not whither, to be out of the frightful din that might pronounce his doom. Woodward was the original Tony Lumpkin, after which the character devolved upon Quick, then a young aspirant: and he had to date his popularity from the good fortune of being trusted with Oliver Goldsmith's whimsical conception. 'Gentleman Smith,' with his customary zeal to aid the business of the theatre, positively refused to enact the part of Young Marlow. In alluding to the many caprices of favoured actors, Dr. Johnson remarks, perhaps very impertinently, "Punch has no feelings!"

The author of the 'Traveller,' the 'Deserted Village,' and the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' merited better treatment from manager, performers, and critics. But putting aside the false dramatic taste of the day, when the sentimental comedy of Kelly and other writers was cherished and listened to with becoming gravity, Goldsmith in the eyes of all had one dreadful drawback to anything like hope of success—he was poor! The cheering voice of the public for a time made him rich; "but the iron had entered his soul," and Goldsmith wrote no more for the stage. He died, aged only forty-five, about two years after the production of She Stoops to Conquer.

It appears, that on February 5, 1773,* Mr. Colman

* See Gentleman's Magazine.

was set upon by a clergyman, with whom he had formerly some dispute, who beat and bruised him in a severe manner. Mr. Colman exhibited articles of the peace against the aggressor. Was this his friend Dr. Elmer, of Bristol? or the worthy Dean, who gave the 'lie direct?'

On Smith and Colman quarrelling, Smith made an application to Garrick for employment, at the close of the season of 1773.* Garrick proffered no encouragement, and Smith affirming that he had been too ill-treated by Colman ever to think of an engagement with him without a certainty of better usage, signified his determination of immediately engaging himself to Yates who (Smith believed, or pretended to believe) had the grant of a patent for a third theatre. Garrick replied in strong terms, June 10, that all matters of business were at an end between them, yet civilly returned him his good wishes. Garrick held stoutly to his purpose in declining Smith's services. Smith, however, pleaded for forgiveness, and in a letter dated August 11th

* Foote's Puppet-show, a new species of entertainment, called 'The Handsome House Maid; or, Piety in Pattens,' was performed at the Theatre Royal, in the Haymarket, for the first time, on Monday, Feb. 15, 1773. The novelty brought such a crowd, that the street was impassable for more than an hour; and the public, in their impatience, broke open the doors of the theatre, great numbers getting into the house without paying anything for their admission. Hats, swords, cloaks, and shoes were lost, several ladies fainted, and a girl had her arm broken in an endeavour to get into the pit. After all, the expectations of the audience were not realised by the performance, and a tremendous uproar ensued, which however was quelled, and the exhibition allowed to proceed.

acknowledged his error. "I am sure that Mr. Harris is desirous of mediating between Mr. Colman and me, but while there is a chance of my being at Drury Lane with you, I shall decline all other engagements; I will say no more about shillings or guineas, and shall with pleasure trust my fame and fortune in your hands. If I have been wrong, impute it to the error of my head, not my heart. I own the golden hopes of a field marshal's staff misled my judgment, and being ill-advised by those I thought wiser than myself, added still to my error!" Garrick's letter of the 25th urged him by all means to accept of Harris's mediation, assuring him that if he and Colman still continued adverse to each other, the moment there was an opening at Drury Lane, with credit to all parties, Smith should be employed.

These hopes, on Garrick's part, arose from the embarrassments of Reddish's affairs, which were likely to prevent the fulfilment of his duties at Drury Lane in the ensuing season; but Lacy's disinclination to having Smith in the company, prevented its completion. In accordance with the advice proffered by Garrick, to be reconciled with Colman, and not to delay a matter of consequence, if Harris would interfere as a friend, Smith appears to have written to Colman, whose reply was answered by the following note addressed to Thomas Harris, Esq.

"Sir, August 6, 1773.

"After the many disagreements betwixt Mr. Colman and me, he may perhaps wish to decline a correspondence with

me; I therefore beg leave, as I am totally disengaged from all theatrical connexions, through you, to offer my services to the managers of Covent Garden Theatre,

And have the honour to be,

Your most obedient and sincere humble Servant,

W. Smith."

"I beg to be favoured with a line, under cover, to the Rev. Mr. Benet, Aldeburg, Suffolk."

The following letter, from Charles Macklin, was accompanied by a piece of Irish poplin; and the allusion to Colman's pregnancy, was suggested by a new comedy called, 'The Man of Business,' not the most thriving of his literary children. Macklin has been thought by many to have been a man of little feeling, but surely his sentiments of paternal tenderness, expressed so naturally in this letter, come from the heart, and are very affecting.

"Dear Sir, August 7, 1773.

"I have just received a species of Irish female garniture, which accompanies this note. I think it has some fancy in it though manufactured in Bœotia; it consists of seven yards, enough for two gowns, or one sacque and petticoat. I have often tried at compliments to the fair sex, but not finding myself happy at that kind of eloquence, I have taken my leave of it for some years. I request that you will dispose of this trifle in your household, and that you will be so kind as to exercise your genius in my name, on this occasion in apologetic compliment and persuasion. I hope you are, in the midwife phrase, as well as can be expected in your condition. I hope you are near your time. Apollo send you a good hour! I have had a disagreeable one lately. My son unexpectedly, unprofitably, and unwelcome, returned from

the East Indies, in disgrace, and justly, for being a *bon vivant*, and guilty of all the idle consequences of that unmercantile, and indeed, as he has managed it, ungentlemanlike character. I was proud of his employment in that honourable service, as it is capable, by an assiduous and faithful discharge of that trust, of furnishing great knowledge and dignity of mind, and of rewarding the man with wealth and honour. I was proud of the parts nature had given him, and of the cultivation I bestowed upon them; I was confident of his assiduity and success, and loved him to a paternal pitch of zeal—now judge of my state of mind. I was the happiest, I am now the most perturbed father in this land. I cannot eat, I have not slept this week, I cannot read, nor remember; and though justice has disgraced him, still he is mine, and I think I shall still be happy in him; for he has a fine understanding, and is sick in bed with self-disgrace and penitence, which must reform, or kill him, which is my only comfort.

"My chains are forged ready for putting on: this unhappy incident has prevented my seeing you. I find paternal affection and philosophy make a most unequal conflict. Nature will not be defied—she must have her way or make her exit. You are a father, may you be a happy one! I pity the character. Especially if the fool is proud and fond."

Many were the mad and unaccountable follies, it appears, of Macklin's son in India. He had received a good education, is said to have been a fair Greek and Latin scholar, with considerable knowledge of the Hebrew, and to have been well acquainted with the French and Persic languages. He had likewise read the English classics with considerable attention; but John Macklin was idle and unmanageable; he had the early dis-

sipations of his father about him. Macklin wished to bring him up to the law; but he was more delighted by the seductive amusements of the theatre. The army seeming to be an object of his choice, Macklin made interest with the Marquess of Townshend, and got him on the establishment at Woolwich; where he distinguished himself in the several branches of mathematical knowledge. He was then appointed a cadet, and was sent out to India, where soon after his landing, he obtained a commission; but his passions destroyed his fortunes, and turned aside everything which talents, education, and high recommendations, might naturally have led him to expect. The following occurrence will serve to show the strange eccentricity of the temper of John Macklin.

In the course of some convivialities with his brother officers, he had a quarrel with one of them, which was taken up so high on both sides, that nothing else but a duel was to determine it; accordingly it was agreed that the parties should meet the next morning, at an appointed place, with seconds and pistols. When John Macklin came on the ground, he appeared wrapped up from head to foot in a loose great coat, so that no part of his figure could be distinguished but his head. This was thought an odd dress for a man about to fight a duel; however it passed without further notice, till the ground was measured, and the antagonists were desired to take their different stands, when to the surprise of all, Macklin, throwing off his great coat, appeared in a perfect state of nature, without any

article of dress about him than a pair of morocco slippers. His antagonist, somewhat surprized, inquired the cause of so odd an appearance? "Why, Sir," replied John Macklin, very coolly, "I will tell you with great candour, in order that, if you please, you may take the same advantages yourself. It is this: I am told, that most of the wounds which prove mortal in India, arise from some part of the woollen or linen, which a man generally carries about him in these encounters, being forced into the flesh along with the ball, and which occasions, in this very hot climate, a speedy mortification. Now, to avoid this, I am determined to fight quite naked, just as you see, that, if I should have the misfortune of being wounded, I shall at least have a better chance of recovery."

The firmness, or novelty of this declaration, and the extraordinary figure which presented itself before him, determined the second of his adversary not to allow the affair to proceed any further, he declaring that they were not on a par for safety, and the alternative of fighting a duel naked, however hot the climate, was neither agreeable to the laws of honour or decency.

Thus ended this strange affair, which, with some other pranks of a more serious nature, compelled John Macklin to leave the military service of the East India Company; and soon after, finding himself deserted by his friends, he returned to England, and once more threw himself on his father for support. The father took him again under his roof and protection; but his dissipation was bred in the bone,

and repeated irregularities at length produced a locked jaw, in which wretched state he languished for some time, then died.

Macklin's conduct to his wayward son deserves notice. He not only took care to provide for him the best education in his power, but gave him the best advice as to his moral character. "There is no quality," he says, in a letter to him, "that commands more respect than integrity; none freedom and independence, more than economy. They are all I have, with industry, to depend upon; and should you make them the rulers of your conduct, you must be happy; without them, you never can.

"Let me repeat this doctrine to you, that he who depends upon continued industry and integrity, depends upon patrons of the noblest, of the most exalted kind. They more than supply the place of birth and ancestry, or even of royal patronage; they are the creators of fortune and fame, the founders of families, and never can disappoint or desert you."

Smith and Colman had not yet quite arranged their theatrical matters, as the two following letters will evince:

"Leiston Hall, Sept. 1, 1773.

"Sir,—Having left Mr. Benet's some time, I did not receive your letter till the 20th of August. It was then incumbent on me, before I gave an answer, to communicate the contents to those friends who have supported me through life, who insist on my not accepting worse terms from you than I was engaged for in my former agreement. If, therefore, you mean by 'my late salary,' what I did receive, and not the advance you had agreed to, it is out of my power

to take it; nor do I think it liberal in you to offer it, as I could not, had you been ever so distressed for a performer, have had the conscience to ask more from you than the salary settled betwixt us before.

"As to your new ally, it is a nice circumstance. There is certainly business enough for both of us, without either being injured; and indeed, more than any one actor can go through. Manage this point with candour and delicacy, and so far from murmuring, I shall be pleased with it.

"In respect to our disagreements, I should have expected that you would have been ingenuous enough to have supposed yourself responsible for part of them; but, be that as it may, should we again be connected, all that has passed disagreeable betwixt us must be mutually and entirely forgotten; or we must go out and settle our differences, like men and gentlemen, for I will not be on il[1] terms with you again. I must therefore beg, that if you cannot receive me heartily and cordially, as I will you, you will decline all treaty with me at once, for better is a dinner of herbs and content, than a stalled ox and strife. I am not apt to quote the Bible, but as peace-making is the business, it is not *mal à propos*.

"Now, Sir, if these matters can be adjusted to our mutual satisfaction, let us shake hands, and drown all remembrance of former feuds in a bottle of claret: for though hot and passionate, when once the olive branch is held out to me I have no resentment, upon honour. I am setting out for Newmarket, and shall return through Hertfordshire; so if you please to give me a line it will find me at Ralph Winter's, Esq., Bishop Stortford, Herts.

I am Sir,

Your very humble servant,

Wm. Smith."

George Colman, Esq.,
Covent Garden, London.

Smith wrote on the same day to Garrick, and intreated him to be secret: "Pray do not let Colman know that we have been in correspondence. I have written to him. You hear Mr. Colman has made me a genteel offer: it does not appear so to *me*, or my friends, who have insisted on my refusing it, which I have done. I would rather receive twelve pounds a week from you, than twenty pounds from him, and still live in hopes that something may happen to bring us together. Farewell!"

Smith's reply to Colman sufficiently shews that he could extend a little beyond the beautiful bounds of truth to gain a point; and that Garrick really knew what Smith had received until the last season, when it appears it was raised from twelve pounds to guineas.

Colman's answer to Smith, appears to have been addressed in somewhat uncourteous terms, yet with sufficient inducement to bring Smith to London, who on his arrival, immediately wrote the following:

"Sir, Saturday, Sept. 11.

"I am this moment come to town and meant to see you. In the opinion of the most impartial, your last letter tends much more to inflame, than abate our disagreement. I held out the olive branch to you, and cannot conceive that anything in my letter deserved the ill-nature and incivility you have returned me. I will make no other comment on it, as I still wish to meet you on good terms, and in good humour. It is said you intend to banish me from the stage; but as you assure me that you wish to see me reinstated on it, I will not believe the report; and most solemnly declare, I hope I never shall see a disturbance in the theatre again on my account, but the public will ever take the part of the

oppressed. I have no thought or inclination of calling them to judge betwixt us, and would wish that our differences might be referred to some mutual friend. In the mean time, I again offer to return to my business, on the same terms I had before agreed with you for. You told me some time ago, you thought my salary inadequate to my labours, and promised me to speak to the gentlemen concerned with you, to make me an additional consideration.

" As your theatre will not open for above a week, I still hope our disagreements may be ended happily, and once more, offer to join on terms of peace and good manners, if I cannot on better.

I am, Sir,
Your very humble servant,
W. Smith.

" I am in Beaufort Buildings, and shall stay in town."

To this letter, Colman thus replied the next day:

" Sir, Richmond, Sept. 12, 1773.

" After your pronouncing my last letter to be ill-natured and uncivil, a further comment was certainly needless. I did not mean that it should appear either: though I cannot think the epistle, to which it was an answer, tended to inspire good humour, or produce compliments.

" I am not so careless of the property which I am destined to superintend, as to wish to banish you from the theatre, to which, if you please, you may be so serviceable; but I firmly believe that whoever strives to create disturbances in it, will at last find that the public will give as little encouragement to causeless turbulence as to tyranny and oppression. Each are equally destructive of peace and good government.

" The matter of business between us stands thus. You are offered your late salary; and you recur to an agree-

ment formerly proposed by me—an agreement, however, which you would never complete, and which you have since, again and again, rejected in the most absolute terms.

" I do not wish to delay bringing matters to a conclusion, for a single moment; but as you consult your friends on every occasion, you cannot think it improper in me to advise with the other managers; and there is not at present one of them in London. Before I received your letter to-day, I proposed being in town next Friday; yet would have attended you here, immediately, but for the reason just mentioned.

" By that day, however, or at all events by the day of our opening, I promise to give in our ultimate ultimatum, and hope to settle articles of a definitive treaty between us."

Smith took two days to consider; and finding that he could not do better, sent the following amiable note to Colman.

" Sir, Beaufort Buildings, Sept. 14, 1773.

" I received your favour, and assure you, I look forward for peace and good humour. I cannot give up my claim of the advance in my salary. I don't wish to hurry you in your determination. If it brings us together, let us meet cordially and cheerfully, without retrospect of former disagreements."

The following letter, signed by the principal male performers of Covent Garden, relates to the Institution of the Theatrical Fund of that Company,* which has since been raised to a permanent

* Instituted December 23, 1765, and confirmed by Act of Parliament, for supporting aged, indigent, and infirm actors and actresses (subscribers to the Fund) of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, and relieving their widows and children.

and liberal relief for decayed actors, mainly by the exertions and subscriptions of its members, aided latterly by the profits and donations at the annual Festivals at the Freemasons' Hall. The late John Fawcett, treasurer to this Fund, very greatly advanced its prosperity by his zeal. Some of the Royal Family have usually presided at the festival, not only of the Theatrical Fund of Covent Garden, but also of its sister charity at Drury Lane, established by Garrick. Two more laudable institutions, among the vast number claiming public aid and sympathy, do not exist. The greater portion of actors and actresses have a daily harassing employment, on small weekly salaries; they are compelled to keep up a certain appearance, which must incur expense; it is almost next to impossible that they can put by money, in any other way than paying a certain average portion of their salaries to the two distinct funds belonging to each theatre. It is true, that the more eminent rarely require to claim that which would be (under certain circumstances) their right, but it is a beneficial and liberally granted annuity to those, who, either by age or misfortune, are prevented from following their profession. When, moreover, it is considered that the public have enjoyed the performances of the claimants in their hey-day of health and spirits, perhaps it is not asking too much, that the public should voluntarily contribute to cheer the cares of those in their old age and destitution, who formerly administered to their enjoyment.

Colman it would appear had been offended, at the jealousy of the Committee of the Theatrical Fund,

in rejecting his offer of kindness and interference, and had in consequence refused a benefit night in favour of their establishment.

"Committee of the Theatrical Fund of Covent Garden Theatre, Oct. 25, 1773.

"SIR,

"We are extremely concerned at having any occasion to address you on a subject which has for its basis the most distant supposition of our having been wanting in respect or attention to Mr. Colman. When this Institution was first set on foot, it was settled as one of the fundamental and irrevocable rules, that no person whatever should be admitted a member, but such as were actually performers at Covent Garden Theatre, and that the Trustees and Committee should be chosen from them only. Mr. Beard, at that time the acting manager, being also a performer, was admitted as a weekly contributor, and chosen a trustee, merely in that situation, totally separated from his other character, and he still continues a trustee in consequence of another first rule, that the trustees should remain, unless a very apparent cause appeared for changing them. This being the situation of the Institution, we assure ourselves that Mr. Colman on this explanation will no longer entertain the most distant idea of any slight or disrespect by not offering him a part in the direction of this society, and hope that he will not withdraw his usual indulgence of a benefit, but believe us very truly his obliged and obedient Servants,

WILLIAM SMITH, GEORGE MATTOCKS, J. C. REINHOLD, THOMAS HULL, ROBERT BENSLEY, M. CLARKE, J. YOUNGER, RICHARD ROTTON,* JOHN DUNSTALL."

* His Theatrical name was subsequently changed to Wroughton. The play-bills for the year 1769, give him that appellation.

Mr. Wroughton, who was highly esteemed as an actor, and as a gentleman in private life, was the last specimen left on the stage of the race of performers, which has been termed "the Garrick school." Those who have had the pleasure to observe his acting in the part of Moody in the 'Country Girl,' and Darlemont in 'Deaf and Dumb,' besides other characters, will allow that, since his time, no performances of so finished a nature have been witnessed.

CHAPTER IX.

1772—4.

Juvenile days of George Colman the younger—His Recollections of Goldsmith, Garrick, and Foote—Dr. Fountain—Marylebone Academy—Death of Colman's mother—Young George Colman at Richmond—Westminster School, 1772—Gerard Andrewes—Bourne—Earls of Buckinghamshire and Somers—Schoolfellows—Colman nearly drowned—George Cranstoun—Sir W. W. Wynne—The Literary Club—R. B. Sheridan—Bow Street Magistrates—Woodward—Dr. Arne—Macklin's law suit.

We will now say a few words on the juvenile days of George Colman the Younger.

His first recollection was of the death of his grandmother, Mrs. Francis Colman, for whom he remembered mourning in a black sash, tied round the waist of a white linen frock. The next impression on his infant mind was caused by no less a person than David Garrick, of whom he thus speaks :—

"Garrick was so intimate with my father, soon after I was born, that my knowledge of him was too early for me to recollect when it commenced ; it would be like the remembrance of my first seeing a tree, or any other object which presents itself to vision, at our beginning to look about us."

The following anecdote of kind-hearted Goldsmith, is related by George Colman the Younger.

"I was only five years old when Goldsmith took me on his knee, while he was drinking coffee one evening with my father, and began to play with me; which amiable act I returned with the ingratitude of a peevish brat, by giving him a very smart slap in the face. It must have been a tingler, for it left the marks of my little spiteful paw upon his cheek. This infantile outrage was followed by summary justice, and I was locked up by my indignant father in an adjoining room, to undergo solitary imprisonment in the dark. Here I began to howl and scream most abominably; which was no bad step towards liberation, since those who were not inclined to pity me might be likely to set me free, for the purpose of abating a nuisance.

"At length a generous friend appeared to extricate me from jeopardy; and that generous friend was no other than the man I had so wantonly molested, by assault and battery. It was the tender-hearted Doctor himself, with a lighted candle in his hand, and a smile upon his countenance, which was still partially red from the effects of my petulance. I sulked and sobbed, and he fondled and soothed, till I began to brighten. Goldsmith, who, in regard to children, was like the Village Preacher he has so beautifully described, for

'Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distress'd,'

seized the propitious moment of returning good-humour; so he put down the candle, and began to conjure. He placed three hats, which happened to

be in the room, upon the carpet, and a shilling under each; the shillings, he told me, were England, France, and Spain. 'Hey, presto, cockolorum!' cried the Doctor, and, lo! on uncovering the shillings which had been dispersed, each beneath a separate hat, they were all found congregated under one. I was no politician at five years old, and therefore, might not have wondered at the sudden revolution which brought England, France, and Spain, all under one Crown; but, as I was also no conjuror, it amazed me beyond measure. Astonishment might have amounted to awe for one who appeared to me gifted with the power of performing miracles, if the good-nature of the man had not obviated my dread of the magician; but from that time, whenever the Doctor came to visit my father—

'I pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's smile;'

a game at romps constantly ensued, and we were always cordial friends, and merry play-fellows. Our unequal companionship varied somewhat in point of sports, as I grew older, but it did not last long; my senior playmate died, alas! in his forty-fifth year, some months after I had attained my eleventh. His death, it has been thought, was hastened by mental inquietude. If this supposition be true, never did the turmoils of life subdue a mind more warm with sympathy for the misfortune of our fellow-creatures; but his character is familiar to every one who reads. In all the numerous accounts of his virtues and his foibles, his genius and absurdities, his knowledge of nature, and his ignorance of the world, his compassion for another's

woe was always predominant; and my trivial story of his humouring a forward child, weighs but as a feather in the recorded scale of his benevolence.

"The frequent letters passing between Garrick at Hampton, and my father, at Richmond, were so many opportunities for me to take airings on horseback, attended by the servant who carried the despatches. On these occasions, I always, on arriving at Garrick's, ran about his gardens, where he taught me the game of trap-ball, which superseded our former nine-pins. He practised, too, a thousand monkey tricks upon me; he was Punch, Harlequin, a cat in a gutter, then King Lear, with a mad touch at times that almost terrified me; and he had a peculiar mode of flashing the lightning of his eye, by darting it into the astonished mind of a child, as a serpent is said to fascinate a bird: which was an attribute belonging only to this theatrical Jupiter.

"All this was very kind and condescending, but it wanted the *bonhommie* of Goldsmith, who played to please the boy, whereas Garrick always seemed playing to please himself, as he did in a theatre, where doubtless he tickled his *amour propre*, while he charmed the spectators; he diverted and dazzled me, but never made me love him; and I had always this feeling for him, though I was too young to define it.

"My rides from Richmond to Garrick's house at Hampton had a 'long run,' as soon as I was able to keep my seat in a saddle; but my first attempt as an equestrian was a failure, for, on bestriding a pony, which, Powell, the actor, just before his death had presented to papa for Master Georgy, the little

quadruped threw the little biped upon the stones, at the stable-door: my horsemanship was, therefore, suspended; and the pony revelled in a field, or shivered in a straw-yard, for a full year and a half. Of this accident I was very lately reminded by General Phipps, who happened to witness it; and whom I shall have further occasion to mention, with his elder brother, Lord Mulgrave. I had the happiness of being introduced into their family by my father, when the present Earl could not have seen more than sixteen summers, and the General was a child not much older than myself; consequently, they were my earliest friends when, in attempting to mount a fiery steed, I proved myself no Alexander, and unworthy of a Bucephalus; but, from that time to this, which is full sixty years ago, they have never thrown me off, as my pony did; on the contrary, in reference to my long enjoyment of their kind and uninterrupted regard, I feel the full force of Cicero's sentiments upon old friendships: '*Veterrimæ quæque (ut ea vina quæ vetustatem ferunt) esse debent suavissimæ; verumque illud est, quod vulgo dicitur, multos modios salis simul edendos esse, ut amicitiæ munus expletum sit.*'

"Foote's earliest notices of me were far from flattering, though they had none of Goldsmith's tenderness: and when he accosted me with his usual salutation of 'blow your nose, child,' there was a whimsical manner, and a broad grin upon his features, which always made me laugh. His own nose was generally begrimed with snuff! and, if he had never been more facetious than upon the subject of my emunctories, which, by the bye,

did not want cleansing, I need not tell the reader, that he would not have been distinguished as a wit; he afterwards condescended to pass better jokes upon me.

"As the greatest portion of my life has been wasted in writing for the stage I may be allowed to mention here, that the first play I ever saw acted was in the playhouse on Richmond Green. I forget the name of the piece; but it appears, that I was initiated early in theatricals, from my having been in petticoats when I assisted at this representation. Little did I then think, while witnessing this play, in the days of my innocence, that I should be guilty of writing so many!

"The commencement of my worldly career will be fixed early enough, many may say much too soon, at the period of my being sent to Marylebone School, at Christmas 1770, when I was about eight years old; for the mere age of pap is to be touched upon only by an infant Hercules, who can tell of strangling serpents in his cradle; and, indeed, the earliest stages of anybody's childhood, just after his emancipation from the nursery, are seldom if ever fruitful of memorable events. Whatever may be at that time interesting or amusing, is generally derived from circumstances and characters which surround the hero of the tale.

"The Marylebone Seminary was, at the time I was placed there, a fashionable stepping-stone to Westminster, and other public schools of the first order. The head master of it, old Doctor Fountain, *Principium et Fons*, was a worthy good-natured *dominie*, in a bush wig; and his wife had a head of

hair which exhibited a prodigious variety of colours. This diversity of tints must have arisen from the different experiments she practised upon her tresses; and so conspicuous was the effect, that, if Berenice's locks had a right to rank among the stars, Mrs. Fountain's *chevelure* had as clear a claim to pass for a rainbow.

"It is odd that this lively old lass, whose faded charms still testified that she had been a fine woman, should have anticipated, by many a year, the chymical attempts now made to beautify ringlets, eyebrows, whiskers, and mustachios. Whatever were the ingredients of her specifics, they evidently failed as much as those modern infallibles which have rendered a purple pate, upon human shoulders, more common than a Blue boar upon a sign-post.

"But, although Dame Fountain rejected powder and pomatum, which were universally worn, she, nevertheless, so far conformed with the prevalent female fashion, as to erect a formidable messuage, or tenement of hair, upon the ground-plot of her pericranium.

"A towering toupee, pulled up all but by the roots, and strained over a cushion on the top of her head, formed the centre of the building; tiers of curls served for the wings; a banging *chignon* behind defended her occiput like a buttress; and the whole fabric was kept tight and weather-proof, as with nails and iron cramps, by a quantity of long single and double black pins.

"If I could borrow, for five minutes, from the author of the Waverley Novels that pen so pencil-like in pourtraying the minutest parts of ancient

attire, I would describe the body-clothes of this matron of Marylebone; but, as my pictures are only sketches, and dabs of the pound-brush, I content myself with saying, that the several dresses and decorations of her person were in keeping with the machinery of her head: and, at a certain hour of each day, she threw over her rustling habiliments a thin snow-white linen wrapper, tied at precise intervals, with strings of the same colour, which descended from her throat to her ancles. In this costume she was daily wont to mount herself upon an elevated stool, near a wide fire-place, to preside over the urchins of her husband's academy, while they ate their dinner; which ceremony was performed in the hall of the mansion;* an old rambling house, allied to the gothic, at long tables covered with cloths most accurately clean, and with wholesome boiled and roast, most excellently cooked.

"It was, certainly, not a display of the sublime and beautiful, but it was a scene of the pompous and the pleasing, when this comely old hen sat in state, watching over the merry brood of chickens under her care. Nothing could be better than her whole arrangements of this puerile refectory; nothing

* This mansion must, I think, from my recollection of the site, and the description extant of it, have been the Manor-house of Marylebone; of which it is said, in Stowe:—

"By a drawing of Rooker's, in the possession of Mr. John White, of Devonshire Place, it seems to have retained some traces of the architecture of Queen Elizabeth's time; but the greater part appears to have been rebuilt at a later period, perhaps by the Forests, and the south front was certainly added, or renewed, not more than a century ago. Devonshire Mews are built upon the site of the Manor-house."

better than the taste and judgment with which she restrained the clamour, but allowed the mirth of the boys, during their repast: and for the repast itself, oh! what batter puddings!

"Should some austere reader throw down the book, indignant at the frivolity of this exclamation, I would have him to know that I could read his moroseness such a lecture upon puddings, and the honour in which they were formerly held, as would make him lower his tone. I could inform this fastidious personage, that the most enlightened men of ancient times thought them not only strengtheners of the body, but sharpeners of the mind; the Marylebone delicacies which I have apostrophised, rose into so much celebrity that various were the visitors; parents of the children, and friends of the Fountains, who came in their carriages to lunch, at the school dinner hour; and, as there was a regular routine of certain fare throughout the week, the batter-pudding days were as well known to the visitors as to the boys.

"There were three Miss Fountains, daughters of the Bush-Wig and the Rainbow-Head, who were grown to womanhood, and inmates of the house. These damsels had no share in the scholastic cares of superintendence, but, I have been told that they much enlivened the family drawing-room, where there were *conversazioni*, cards, and *petits soupers;* and sometimes music, when a married sister, who was famous for her prowess on the harpsichord, paid them a visit, and flourished away in grand style. The elder of the unmarried girls had, in person, overshot the prescribed curve of Hogarth's

Line of Beauty; but then, she was vastly clever and agreeable, as every Mrs. Candour says, after lamenting that a young lady's figure is somewhat warped. I recollect little of the youngest girl, who, I believe, was kept rather in the back-ground, except that she was good-natured and good-looking, with the bloom and *agrémens* of youth; but the second sister, Di—, she was the great attraction; and with her charms and her chat, contributed much, no doubt, to increase the number of exquisites who assisted at the 'at homes' of Mrs. Fountain.

"This Diana, who was the Venus of the family, who afterwards became a Juno, married Mr. Hargrave,* of high reputation in his time, at the Chancery bar; a gentleman of profound learning in the law, and the laborious unraveller of the intricate questions involved in the famous Thelusson Will; but how a man of deep research and full practice in Chancery, finds time to make love enough to get married, is to me astonishing!

"There was only one female in this establishment, who was not only my dislike, but my dread and aversion. This was a squeezy, pale, lemon-faced maid, whose hard features, and naturally repellant qualities must, I think, have insured her a most unequivocal title to that chaste appellation; and, from the time I last saw her, which is more than half a century ago, to the present moment, she never enters my head without giving me a pain in the bowels, *et pour cause;* Sir, it is all owing to a combination of ideas.

* Francis Hargrave.

" Dame Fountain had a reverent anxiety for the health of every boy committed to her charge :—there never was a transient head-ache, a casual flush in the face, or tickling in the trachea, to raise suspicion of a cough, or in the fauces, to give an alarm of sore throat, or a pimple on the skin, the supposed forerunner of a rash, but the unhappy urchin who indicated these symptoms was condemned to be physicked. Unluckily Mrs. Fountain had but one recipe, and she applied it to every disorder, as the fiddler fiddled Bobbing Joan, because he could fiddle nothing else; it was her panacea; and, whenever she passed sentence for imbibing it, the lemon-faced virgin, whom I held in such fear and abhorrence, was the executioner. It was my wretched lot, being a puny child, to be continually doomed to a dose of this filth; and, on the execution days, I was taken by surprise early in the morning on the landing-place of the stairs, while creeping down from bed to the school-room; there stood the pale Pucelle, holding a table-spoonful of water, with ten grains of powder of senna floating on the top.

" At first sight of me, she stirred up the senna in the spoon with her fore-finger, the nail of which was bordered, like writing-paper in a deep mourning; the signal at last was familiar to me; ' Come, child !' was all she ever uttered; I knew the dreadful word of command; and, with tears trickling down my cheeks, gulped the nauseous draught, half mixed, lumpy, green, gritty, and griping. But, oh! the pains I afterwards endured! Yet this woman do I forgive. I would even write an epitaph upon her, since, now, no doubt, she is dead, for she was

no chicken when I knew her. Peace to her maidenly remains! ere this, they must be pulverized and levigated more—much, much more, than the gritty powder of senna, which, devil incarnate as she then was, she forced me to swallow.

"Domine Fountain was a quiet, kindly old pedagogue; and, I think, illustrated the adage relative to the effect of sparing the ferula. As a teacher of the ancient classics, he did not overburden his pupils with Latin and Greek; and they had respect enough for the dead languages to disturb their repose as little as the Doctor's mild discipline would permit.

"There were two French masters, regular fixtures, in the establishment; one of them, if I recollect aright, assisted also in the Latin department.

"The teachers who attended at certain hours, on stated days, were a writing and arithmetic master, a drawing-master, a dancing master, and a fencing master. From such kind of fugitive instructors as these last, who come like April showers, a crowd of boys may obtain a sprinkling, but they never can be wet through with knowledge; nor, indeed, did we appear to grow mighty learned from the lessons of our resident masters.

"It was a law of the school that we were to converse, throughout the day, in what was there called French; accordingly, except when whispering in holes and corners, we gabbled worse than young Hottentots, in a sort of jargon which was not even the corruption of any language upon earth! It was true *Marylebone patois*, and no other. Even the footman of the family, a ruddy thickset lout in a

livery, from the West Riding of Yorkshire, deemed it decorous to *parly voo*, in his communication with the pupils; and, whenever he had occasion to announce that a friend or a messenger had arrived to take any one of them home, he put his head in at the door-way of the school-room, and bawled out, in a stentorian voice that did honour to the West-Riding, 'Measter such-a-one, *venny shurshay*.' To expound the enigma of this vociferation, it must be recollected, that, in the French language, *venir* signifies to come, and *chercher*, to seek, or inquire after; and, by Yorkshire John's north-country conjugation of these gallican verbs, he meaned it to be understood, that somebody had arrived to inquire for a boy; or, according to his own translation, had 'Come to fetch him.'

"On the eve of my quitting this Seminary for ever —it being the night of Maundy Thursday—I made a ridiculous vow, and was forsworn:

'At Lovers' perjuries, they say, Jove laughs;'

those of children, it is to be hoped, are as pardonable.

"As it was Passion-week, most of my schoolfellows had been taken home for the short Easter holidays; I had been promised to be sent for, but no messenger came; alone, disappointed, vexed, sobbing, and forlorn, I went to bed in my stockings; and mentally resolved, with all the earnestness of childish ostentation, never to pull them off, till I had seen my mother.

"Next day, Good Friday, Yorkshire John an-

nounced to me the welcome '*venny shurshay*,' and joyfully I sought my home; but, alas! it had become a house of mourning. The window shutters were closed; all was sad, and my father in the deepest affliction. My mother had died that morning, March 29, 1771; she had been for a short time ill, but not dangerously so, till on the preceding night; she had, as I was afterwards informed, swallowed, by mistake, a wrong medicine. I never saw her more! the impressions of sorrow are seldom lasting upon a childish mind, but I shed many a tear in secret.

"I need not tell the reader, that my vow of Maundy Thursday night was broken; it dwells not, I confess, upon my conscience; my poor dear mother's Spirit has never risen to accuse me, nor do I think that any Spirit, but Hosier's Ghost, would ever visit me, for the perjury about my stockings.

"On my mother's death, my father took me with him from his house in town, to his villa at Richmond in Surrey. During the many years he enjoyed this retirement, he used repeatedly to quote, in reference to it, from his favourite Terence, of whose comedies he has given to the world so admirable a translation,

'Ex meo propinquo rure hoc capio commodi:
Neque agri, neque urbis odium me unquam percipit;
Ubi satias cæpit fieri, commuto locum.*'

* I 've this convenience from my neighb'ring villa;
I 'm never tired of country or of town,
For, as disgust comes on, I change my place.
Translation by Colman the Elder.

In fact, he had a set of quotations, as well as phrases and figures of his own, as most men have, unconsciously more or less, which he was in the habit of introducing as often as he could find occasion: for instance, there was a horse-ferry across the Thames, and the boat in motion, wafting over passengers, carriages, and cattle, was a particularly picturesque object when viewed from his grounds; this was at last superseded by a bridge; and if any friend condoled with him on the loss of the ferry-boat, he was sure to say, 'Sir, you could not put a higgler's cart into it, that it did not become beautiful.' This eternal higgler's cart came over my ears in equal frequency with the quotation from Terence; and when I grew up into a wicked stripling, I would sometimes, to my shame be it spoken, whisper a Richmond visitor, what my father would say in precise words upon certain topics; and then, by leading him to them, prove the truth of my assertion. I practised this youthful piece of waggery once too often, for one day he discovered that I was hoaxing him. I fear that he never entirely forgot this irreverence; for, from that time forth, he carefully kept clear of the 'higgler's cart,' though now and then, he caught himself tripping at the '*ex meo propinquo rure.*'

"Should any grave reader be startled at the liberty I took with the paternal character, I beseech him to make some allowance for the levity of youth; let him remember that I have now taken shame to myself for it; and I do assure him, that I never deliberately infringed the fifth commandment.

"In those days, Richmond was to London more like what Tusculum was to Rome, for it boasted in itself and its vicinities the villas of various celebrated and classical men, mingled with those of the grandees. All these illuminati combined, might not possibly equal a Virgil, a Horace, or a Cicero; there were, however, besides my father at the bottom of the hill, Sir Joshua Reynolds at the top; Owen Cambridge, a man of good estate, not unknown to the Muses, on the opposite bank of the river; Horace Walpole, afterwards Earl of Orford, at Strawberry-hill, with Kate Clive's cottage at his elbow, and Garrick at Hampton.

"In earlier times Pope gave celebrity in song, to the grotto he had reared 'near Thames translucent wave;' and Thomson, the author of the Seasons, not forgetting his Sophonisba, 'Oh, Sophonisba! Sophonisba*! oh!!!' lived, and died, and was buried, at Richmond.† Some thirty years after him a redundant namesake of his, a naval Captain Thompson, with the letter *p*, resided in Kew Lane; a poet, it must be owned, of somewhat ignoble and libertine fame, and not worthy of notice now, if Churchill had not recorded him and his house by the road side, in the following extempore couplet:

'Here lives a half-pay poet, run to rust,
With all his willows weeping in the dust.'

Though born in London, I was consigned more to

* This line in his tragedy is remarkable, not only in itself, but for the well-known parody upon it;—

Oh, Jamie Thomson! Jamie Thomson, oh!

† His dwelling was in that part of Kew Foot-lane which is generally considered as belonging to Richmond.

the cultivation of my father's rural Gods, than to the worship of his Penates in the metropolis. Richmond, therefore, was not only my playful scene of action during infancy and childhood,, but my headquarters afterwards in the school holidays. Memory, which associates the dawn and forenoon of my life with the well known spot, gives it, to this day, a strong hold upon my affections; and I revert to its luxuriant meadows, and winding streams, with that fondness of attachment which an ultra-sexagenarian feels, in the recollection of his earliest delights.

"Had not Nature been so prodigal to the place, the late crowd of cockney buildings would not, perhaps, have arisen to injure some of its charms: as a frail fair one might never have been ruined, but for her own attractions. Still, however, it is sweet fairy ground: it has still its elegant garden-like surrounding country, and softness of scenery; of which my father expressed his notions by constantly declaring—which, by-the-by, was another of his pet phrases—that 'all its shepherds were in silk.'

"When my father's grief for his domestic loss was mitigated, he placed me at Westminster School; for a time, therefore, I bade 'adieu to the village delights,' and the fragrant air of Richmond, for Dean's Yard, and the neighbouring stench of Tothill Fields; then the receptacle of half the filth of the metropolis. This was just as I had attained, or was upon the point of attaining, I forget which, my tenth year.

"Westminster School is such old ground, that little or nothing new can be said of it: so I wish I could

skip school altogether; but it is too material a thread in a man's autobiographical web to be omitted. Dr. Smith was head-master, in my time, and a very dull and good-natured head-master he was. Dr. Vincent was under-master, a man of learning, and plaguily severe: his severity, indeed, might be incidental to his position, and arise from his having to do with the young fry of the school; for there is no ratiocinating with urchins of very tender years; you cannot make the same impression upon them as upon older lads, by expostulating, by shaming them, or by rousing their pride; and when there is no maintaining order by an appeal to their heads, nothing is left for it, but an application to their tails; and this last was Vincent's way of disciplining his infantry; but he lost his temper, and struck and pinched the boys, in sudden bursts of anger, which was unwarrantable. A pedagogue is privileged to make his pupil red in the proper place with birch, but he has no right to squeeze him black and blue with his fingers; and so I would have told Vincent, who is now no more, had I encountered him in my riper years; but he subsided, I have heard, into the usual mildness of a head-master, when he succeeded to that situation, which was after I had quitted school. One of the boys drew a caricature of him, which was published in the print-shops, with the following hexameter under it:

"Sanguineos oculos volvit, virgamque requirit*;"

* Which may be thus translated:

"He rolls
His blood-shot eyes, and bellows for a rod."

upon which he remarked to the boys, with much good sense and moral truth, that, though he laughed at the caricature, he disapproved of the line annexed to it; because the disorder in his eyes was his misfortune, and not his fault; and it was illiberal and inhuman to ridicule a man for his afflictions.

" Gerard Andrewes, late Dean of Canterbury, was one of the ushers, in those days, but not then conspicuous, though he excelled greatly afterwards as a preacher. Hayes, another usher, was thought more clever by the boys, in consequence, I suppose, of some of his Epilogues to the annual representations of Terence's comedies. Such epilogues are always of the humorous cast, but it requires no great fancy to be an English wag in the Roman language; for, if I be not mistaken in my notion, the comicality chiefly consists in describing things by that *tournure* of Latin expression which elevates low or familiar subjects, and thereby produces a kind of mock heroic; as, for example, in Bourne's Schola Rhetorices :—

> ' Londini ad pontem, Billingi nomine, porta est,
> Unde ferunt virides ostrea Nereides.'

" Here, it is seen, that, the joke lies in a general air of pomposity, such as calling London Bridge and Billingsgate, the bridge of London and the gate of Billing; and oyster-women, the green Nereids; which is no extraordinary ' pass of pate.' Bourne's *Poematia,* however, are greatly above the common level of this kind of writing. Bourne was, also, a Westminster usher and epilogue-writer.

" I boarded at Jones's, in Great Dean's Yard.

Among the elder boarders there, in the first years of my tirocinium, were Vernon, afterwards Archbishop of York, who was about to leave school as I entered it; Bob Hobart, the late Earl of Buckinghamshire, whose *fag* I was in particular; and Cocks, the present Earl Somers. Jones, the master of the boarding-house, retired from it during my stay; and Mrs., or, as we politely designated such lady presidents, *Mother* Clapham, succeeded him; bringing with her an additional number of boys, and joining her own firm, already established, to the late Jones's. This union greatly increased the number of boarders; and, before and after the amalgamation, there were, among my young fellow lodgers, in addition to those already mentioned as subsequent *hommes célèbres et nobles*, Willis, the present Dr. Robert Willis; Reynolds, my brother dramatist; Germaine, now Duke of Dorset; and Paget, now the Marquis of Anglesea. Percy, who died young, son of the late Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore, and editor of the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, was, also, one of our hundred, with others whom I do not now recollect.

"There was a boy, too, of the name of Cranstoun, a younger brother of the then Lord Cranstoun, whom I well and affectionately remember; for, without his generous aid, I should have had no particulars of myself to relate; but this requires explanation. Be it known, then, to the reader, that once, on a fine summer's evening, during my sojournment at Westminster, I was drowned: an ominous

adventure for a future poet, and portentous of my prowess in ' the art of sinking.'

" This submersion in the silver Thames took place not far from Westminster Bridge, near the southern shore, and immediately opposite to the premises of the well-known Dicky Roberts, who, at the time I was drowned, and for many years afterwards, furnished school-boys with a capital opportunity of undergoing the same ceremony. This chance he provided at a moderate price, by letting out sailing-boats, wherries, punch-bowls, funnies, and other aquatic vehicles, calculated to convert horizontal into perpendicular motion ; and to send young gentlemen to the bottom of the river, instead of carrying them forward on the surface.

" My young friend George Cranstoun and I happened to be the only boys who were then bathing, in the place above-mentioned ; he swam like a duck, and I no better than a pig of lead. It was low tide, and the channel of the river was very near the bank ; from which I walked forward, up to my chin in the water, and then turning round, I began to *strike* with arms and legs, as an attempt at swimming, in order to regain the shore ; but, instead of approaching *terra firma*, the current, which was very strong, while I was very weak, carried me out of my depth, into the channel. It is a false notion that drowning people rise only three times ; at least, I found it so in my case ; for my alternations of sinking and rising were many. Cranstoun had wandered in the water to a considerable distance

from me, but he had seen my peril before I finally disappeared, and had to work up against a strong tide, to come to my assistance. At length, he gained the spot where I had gone down; I do not think that I had quite reached the bottom; he was, however, obliged to dive for me, when he caught me by the hair, and, with great risk of his own life, kind-hearted fellow as he was! brought me to shore: but I was insensible; and, on my return to a perception of what was passing, I found myself stretched upon my stomach, along the benches of a wherry, which was drawn up on dry land; while Dicky Roberts was applying hearty smacks, with the flattest end of a scull, to that part of my person which had so often smarted under the discipline of Dr. Vincent. This, no doubt, was Dicky's principle of restoring the animal functions; though it may safely be presumed that he had never studied Harvey on the Circulation of the Blood.

"I think that the sensation of drowning must be something like that of hanging, for I felt that kind of tightness about the throat which I conjecture must be experienced by those who undergo the severest sentence of the English law; yet, in the alarm and agitation of the moment, I was not conscious of any great pain. A blaze of light flashed upon my eyes; this I imagine to have arisen from the blood rushing to the brain; though it might be occasioned by the sun-beams, which were then playing in full force upon the water.*

* Much to the credit of the more modern Masters of Westminster School, bathing, which was only winked at formerly, is

"In the unthinking spirit of school-boys, Cranstoun and I trudged back, from the waterside, to Dean's Yard, full of glee; treating my providential escape from death, and his preservation of my life, as light as if it were a scrape we had got into and out of again, in some frolic: in the same thoughtless way, we mentioned the accident to one or two of our intimates; who, with equal levity, asked, whether I had not, 'been in a devil of a funk.' Still, there are impulses in early youth which, in some measure, supply the want of moral sense and reflection; and I was grateful upon this occasion, without being aware of it; for, from that time, I was greatly attached to Cranstoun, as long as we remained at school together; though the effect arose instinctively, without any consideration of the cause; and I never clearly discovered that my friendship for him had increased because he had been my preserver.

"As one instance, among many, that school connexions are not lasting, I have never seen Cranstoun from the time of our leaving Westminster; and I am told that he is now no more! He was, I believe, a captain in the navy, and lived much out of England.

"My escapes to the paternal roof, from the overhanging beams and rafters of Westminster School, for ceiling it has none, were very frequent; but, allowed by the usher, resident at my boarding-house, and admitted by my father; they were, however, much

now allowed, under precautionary arrangements to ensure perfect safety; and there is a part of the river marked out, at Millbank, for the boys, who are attended by a waterman.

more propitious to my taste for pleasure than to my advancement in erudition.

"There are certain saints in the calendar who never dreamed how much they should contribute, centuries after their deaths, to the protraction of rudimental learning; many of their anniversaries give the boys a whole day of relaxation; even Saint David,* seconded by Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, released us annually from study, by nine o'clock in the morning: these, with other red-letter days, and the constantly recurring half-holidays, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, and whole holidays of course on Sundays, in addition to the periodical vacations of a month, and sometimes more, all these were so many loop-holes to creep out at; and I took advantage of them all, by excursions to my father's house, either in town or country; to the first for half a day's stay, to the latter, chiefly, except in the depth of winter, for my more extended visits.

"Now and then, indeed, instead of going home, I devoted a half-holiday to a trip upon the water, or upon land, with some of my school-fellows; which was effected by 'skipping out of bounds,' in the

* The late Sir Watkin Williams Wynne always begged a play, as it is termed, for the Westminster boys, on the anniversary of the Patron Saint of the Cambro-Britons, a custom, which is, I believe, continued by his son, the present Sir Watkin. The worthy Baronet came into the school upon these occasions, and knelt down by the side of the head-master during the prayer which is daily read, at the commencement and termination of the school-hours. A play differs from a whole holiday, inasmuch as it is granted at the request of some individual, and the boys go into school in the morning before their relaxation for the rest of the day.

'lock-up house;' this we called 'going upon a scheme;' so termed, I suppose, like '*lucus a non lucendo*,' from having no regular scheme in it at all.

"It is evident, however, that I had too many opportunities of blending the Home and Foreign Departments; and, as 'all the talents,' of my father's time were occasionally his guests, I soon grew better acquainted with the countenances of living great men than with the pages of dead ones. Unable as I then was to enjoy brilliant conversation, even in my own language, or to relish fine writing in any language whatever, still I was decidedly of opinion that listening to modern wits in English, was greatly preferable to reading the ancient classics, either in Latin or Greek.

"A constellation of genius was shining forth at this period; and, when I was first suffered to be dazzled with their blaze, at my father's table, I was so young that I scarcely ventured to open my mouth, but to eat and drink; a taciturnity of which I am not now, in convivial parties, very particularly observant; and it is certain that I have long ceased to be a votary of Harpocrates.

"At one of my earliest admissions to the honours of these *symposia*, I sat down with Johnson, Foote, Gibbon, Edmund Burke, the two Wartons, Garrick, Lord Kellie, Topham Beauclerk, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and some others. My father, with most of these, if not all, were members of the Literary Club; which title, given to them by the million, was not pleasing to several of its fastidious members; who

styled it, *par excellence*, THE CLUB, to mark its superiority over all others.

"This Club, though it boasted certain individuals of the first order in natural and acquired ability, was rated too high; or, rather, society rated itself too low; for so pusillanimous in that day were educated persons in general, that they submitted to the dominion of a self-chosen few, and were almost afraid to say that their intellects were their own, in the presence of these despots; who in their turn had a despot over themselves; for while the Club intimidated the town, Johnson awed the Club.

"In proof of this, I was told in later times the following anecdote, by Sheridan. When he was beginning to be known in the world, a little before his first dramatic productions, he dined in company with Johnson, and several of the Club; when the Doctor advanced one of his dogmas, which was tantamount to saying that black is white;* Sheridan, knowing that black is black, and not white, gave a plump *negatur* to the Doctor's affirmation; in short, whatever Johnson's hypothesis might have been, Sheridan argued against it manfully, with all the eagerness of youth, unconscious of his peril in attacking so formidable an antagonist. He felt too, no doubt, those powers within him which, soon afterwards, charmed the stage, and ultimately surprised the senate. The party, and particularly those individuals of it who

* A practice not unfrequent with him, in his discussions; for he acknowledged (as we have been told) that he sometimes contended for truth, and sometimes for victory.

belonged to the Club, trembled for him, at the onset; they shrugged up their shoulders, and seemed to say, "Poor young man! clever, but ruined! He is rousing the Lion, and it will soon be all over with him!" The Lion, however, was in one of his generous moods; though growling, he did not grow ferocious; though galled, he was not revengeful; he took his defeat, for defeated he was, in good part, and Sheridan, through Johnson's forbearance to proclaim him a blockhead, escaped annihilation.

"What times! when a young genius could be reputation-crushed, and that genius Richard Brinsley Sheridan, by entering into discussion, and truth palpably on his side, with a literary dictator!* Mortals, then, enjoyed as copious and general a distribution of brains as at any period, before or since; and those brains were sufficiently cultivated

* Subsequently to his fearful encounter, when Sheridan had produced his "School for Scandal," and established his theatrical fame in the year 1777, and moreover had paid a compliment to the Lion, in a Prologue to Savage's Play of Sir Thomas Overbury, we are informed by the adulatory Boswell, that "Johnson was very desirous of a reconciliation with old Mr. Sheridan." "It will, therefore," (says the biographer) "not seem at all surprising that he was zealous in acknowledging the brilliant merit of his son. While it had as yet been displayed only in the drama, Johnson proposed him as a member of the Literary Club, observing, that, 'He who had written the two best comedies of his age, is surely a considerable man,' and he had accordingly the honour to be elected, for an honour it undoubtedly must be allowed to be, when it is considered of whom that society consists, and that a single black ball excludes a candidate."—People now opine, that there is more honour in having written "The Rivals," and the "School for Scandal," than in escaping the single black-ball which excluded a candidate from the club.

to enable people to shake off their mental yoke. The hour, however, was not arrived; but, how completely, within the last forty years, has the world emancipated itself from this tyranny; and how much improved is conversation now, when sound sense feels, and asserts, its strength; when wits and literati are no longer bugbears; and when extraordinary talent of all kinds can excite admiration, without inspiring fear, and commanding a disgraceful subjection."

But to return to the correspondence of George Colman the elder. Here is a curious note from the magistrates of Bow Street.

"Bow Street, Oct. 1773.

"The magistrates now sitting in Bow-street present their compliments to Mr. Colman, and acquaint him, that on the Beggars' Opera being given out to be played some time ago at Drury Lane Theatre, they requested the managers of that theatre not to exhibit this opera, deeming it productive of mischief to society, as in their opinion it most undoubtedly increased the number of thieves; and the managers obligingly returned for answer that for that night it was too late to stop it, but that for the future they would not play it if the other house did not. Under these circumstances, from a sense of duty and the principles of humanity, the magistrates make the same request to Mr. Colman and the rest of the managers of His Majesty's theatre Royal, Covent Garden; the same opera being advertised to be played there this night."

To which communication Mr. Colman returned the following answer:—

"Mr. Colman presents his best respects to the magi-

strates with whose note he has just been honoured. He has not yet had an opportunity of submitting it to the other managers, but for his own part cannot help differing in opinion with the magistrates, thinking that the theatre is one of the very few houses in the neighbourhood that does not contribute to increase the number of thieves.

" Covent Garden,
Wednesday Morning."

In those 'Jonathan Wild' days, Mr. Colman's reply to the magistrates was rather severe.

Garrick had proposed that Hoadly should translate a French drama of a grave cast, and the latter in a letter dated Nov. 16, 1773, frankly writes his opinion. " You seem now to give into Dr. Goldsmith's ridiculosity, in opposition to all sentimentality. If so, this will not do, it being of a grave cast; yet your 'Guardian' did. I thought of calling it 'The White Lie,' but the newspapers say, that Colman's comedy, is to be called 'The White Liar.' As the character is represented to be a good natured fellow betraying himself into scrapes, is it not likely to be taken from my " Jack Shatter," which Mr. Colman had in his custody a good while?"

Colman's comedy of the " Man of Business," originally intended to have been produced as " The White Liar," was played at Covent Garden, Jan. 29, 1774, with some applause, though not without opposition.

The following letter is from the celebrated comedian, Henry Woodward.

" Dear Sir, January 16th, 1774.

" I rejoice that every thing went last night better than you expected. Every measure which you have taken, I should have taken had I been in your situation; and I look upon myself as much obliged to you for every part of your conduct towards me during my indisposition. I think with you that it would be indiscreet to announce my performance, till there is a certainty of my being able to do so. I am now in a fair way, and I hope nothing unforeseen will happen to hinder my speedily showing how willing I am to be, Sir,

Your humble servant,

H. Woodward.

" George Colman, Esq."

The subjoined letter from Dr. Arne, of musical fame, relates to a comic opera, called " Achilles in Petticoats," which had been altered from Gay by George Colman.

" Tom's Coffee-house, Jan. 28, 1774.

" Dear Sir,

" Having received some private hints, that Mr. Mattocks, since the necessary improvements in Catley's part, has in conference with you rather shewed an inclination to retard the performance of Achilles, than to forward it, I could not, though I hate to write a solicitous letter, resist the impulse of my fear on so alarming an occasion. Would any one think that this man owes all his merit and success in his profession to me? All the answer I made was, that my reliance was on a gentleman and a man of honour who agreed to perform it this season, and whose word is to me an oracle.

" For six months past, I have given my whole time and labour to this business. The first act was finished, and the

music delivered to the performers nearly three months past. The second act was ready before they were prepared for a rehearsal of the first. The third act came under the same predicament, and I have since, without an hour's delay, written four new songs for Catley, and two for Reinhold; so that I hope you will be of opinion that not the least blame can be laid on me.

"Notwithstanding the deserved success of 'Mother Shipton,'* the old proverb, that 'store 's no sore,' will ever be true; and it has long been the practice of both Theatres to relieve a strong performance with another, in order to keep both in their full strength, and to give the public that variety which keeps curiosity awake, and fills the houses every night. This is only an observation drawn from the practice of you gentlemen managers—not a prescription to Mr. Colman, whose knowledge and attention require no monitor. Several noble friends of mine, two of whom have mentioned this opera to the King, have earnestly inquired to know the day fixed for its performance. You would, therefore, infinitely oblige me if you would enable me to give them a satisfactory answer, particularly as to-morrow I must attend their Catch Club.

"Will you, my dear Sir, be so kind as directly to order continued rehearsals of it, and as I know you have little leisure to write, be pleased only to send three words of comfort to

Your devoted friend and obliged humble servant,

THOMAS A. ARNE."

The long contested cause between Macklin, plaintiff, and Colman, defendant, in an action for 1000 guineas, the sum demanded by the plaintiff for the time he was not permitted by the public to appear on the stage, on account of some offence he had

* A pantomime so called.

given by his non-performance, was determined in the Court of King's Bench, on Friday, February 20, 1774. Lord Mansfield advised a compromise, and it being left to his Lordship, he gave the plaintiff 500 guineas, and each to pay his own costs. The suit had been nine years in Chancery. In a letter dated the 20th of May in the same year, Macklin made a formal demand of his salary from Colman. This was written at the period when Macklin had been driven from the stage by the public. It was his plan to make weekly applications for his salary, to keep his claims upon the Proprietors, relative to his engagement with them, alive.

"James-street, Covent Garden, May 20, 1774.

"Sir,

"According to my agreement with you, and the other Proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, my weekly salary was due last Saturday, which I now demand. At the same time I give you notice, that I am ready to play any part that you shall appoint me to play, and to perform my engagement in every part of it with you, and the other Proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, whenever you shall call upon me for that purpose.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

Charles Macklin."

CHAPTER X.

1774—75.

Close of Colman's Management at Covent Garden—His Industry—The Patents—Moody—Rich and Sir Thomas Skipwith—The Duke of Grafton and Lacy—Shuter—Hunting for a Patent — Garrick — Cumberland — Jephson — Mossop — Fitzpatrick—Dublin Theatre—Death of Mossop—Literary Club—Bon Ton—Wilkes, Lord Mayor—Lady Mayoress's Rout—Mansion House Lyrics—Garrick at Bath—Henderson—Sir Joshua Reynolds—Hannah More—Macklin's Trial—Lord Mansfield—The Duchess of Kingston—Trip to Oxford—Both the Colmans—Bonnel Thornton's Death-bed—Woodstock—The Peak.

Colman relinquished the management of Covent Garden Theatre, May 26, 1774, when an epilogue which he had written for the occasion, was spoken by Miss Barsanti. One of the King's pages was deputed to obtain a copy of this epilogue for the Queen's perusal.

Hull was appointed acting manager in place of Colman, and the ex-manager was no sooner defunct in office, than he was assailed in satire and splenetic verse. An ode, not the least conspicuous amongst its fellows, made its appearance in June, entitled "Resignation, or Majesty in the Dumps." Even some of Colman's humble adherents when he was in power, now, in accordance with human nature, in the words of Smollett, "declared against him as the

setting sun, from whose beams they could expect no further warmth." Colman had served a seven years apprentice in theatrical management—a situation that has been defined as a small 'hell upon earth.' Now 'Hull' undertook 'Hell.'

Dr. John Hoadley, in a letter to Garrick, dated April 10, 1774, alluding to the death of Lacy, which occurred January 23rd of the same year, writes, "I trust you gain ease and satisfaction, as well as emolument, by having no partner in the patent. I suppose Master Colman is tired enough, though he seemed to have overcome his chief difficulties."

Colman had entirely conducted the stage department of the Theatre Royal Covent Garden since his first appointment in 1767, and he added to assiduity in the onerous office of acting manager, indefatigable industry as an author. During this period, he produced the comedy of 'The English Merchant;' an alteration of 'King Lear;' the comedy of 'The Oxonian in Town;' the comedy of 'Man and Wife;' the burletta of 'The Portrait;' the masque called 'The Fairy Prince;' an alteration of Milton's 'Comus;' an opera entitled 'Achilles in Petticoats;' and the comedy of 'The Man of Business.' These dramas have considerable merit. In all his minor pieces Colman's plots were simple; yet they contain strong character, and many were aimed at the fashionable and prevailing follies of his day. As regards his partners, Powell acted; of Harris and Rutherford, we have not any document to prove that they did much in furtherance of the beneficial

results of the property at the period; although it must be acknowledged that, in many subsequent seasons, Mr. Harris proved himself a liberal and most excellent manager of Covent Garden Theatre. Mr. Colman's share was purchased by his partners, and was immediately assigned to them.

Much has been written respecting the patents of the two theatres, Covent Garden and Drury Lane. The enormous increase in their value will be made evident, by the subjoined extract of a letter from the veteran actor, Moody, dated March, 1798. Mr. Moody states that he received his information from Christopher Rich, brother of John Rich, the patentee of Covent Garden Theatre, and that Sir Thomas Skipwith's patent fell into his father's hands in the following manner:

"Mr. Rich, the father of John and Christopher, was an attorney. He had a client to whom Sir Thomas Skipwith stood indebted in a large sum of money, and Mr. Rich meeting the attorney of the latter, made his demand. The other replied, there were no means of paying him, but "a patent to act plays by." They then agreed to put it up to auction. They did so; and Mr. Rich bought it in for fourscore pounds. This patent sold in the life-time of Christopher Rich, after the rate of fourscore thousand! for the present proprietors gave Mr. Colman twenty thousand pounds for his quarter! This information I had from Christopher Rich at Mr. Coombe's, in Cook's Court, five-and-twenty years ago. It may be further stated, that no receipt having passed, the present proprietors had to pay

Sir Thomas Skipwith's relations a large sum of money to substantiate the property.*

* As regards the Drury Lane patent, Mrs. Bellamy records the following anecdote:

"Mr. Lacy, who was at the time one of the proprietors of Ranelagh, had been engaged by two bankers, whose names were Green and Ambrose, to assist in the management of Drury Lane Theatre. But Mr. Lacy having formed a design of obtaining a patent in his own name, to the exclusion of the two gentlemen that employed him, he pursued for this purpose the following scheme. Being a professed jockey, he took care constantly to attend the Croydon Hunt, of which the Duke of Grafton, the Lord Chamberlain, was the leader. His Grace observed with pleasure the numerous train that attended him; and remarking that Mr. Lacy was one of the most constant of his followers, took occasion one day to admire the horse that he rode. This was the bait which the intended patentee had laid, and no sooner did he find that it had taken effect, than he begged the Duke's acceptance of his Pegasus.

This, his Grace declined, unless he might be allowed to make him some compensation. Upon which Mr. Lacy informed his Grace, that his employers were upon the point of breaking, which might have been the case, and that he should be obliged to him for a patent in his own name. His request was complied with, and in a few days he became sole patentee of Drury Lane Theatre; while the two gentlemen who had purchased of Mr. Fleetwood, were obliged to accept the places of door-keepers in the very house which had lately belonged to them. Mr. Lacy afterwards sold a moiety of the patent to Mr. Garrick in 1747, who became the ostensible manager, and through whose transcendant merit and indefatigable application the Theatre prospered."

Mrs. Bellamy continues:—

"The Duke of Grafton frequently honoured my cottage at Hollwood with his company, as it was from this wood that the foxes were unearthed for the Croydon Hunt, and his Grace observing that son of humour, Shuter, to be often of his hunting party, requested that I would ask him to join us at dinner. This I accordingly did; but Shuter, though convivial to a degree when he imagined himself king of the company, did not now feel himself at home. Observing this taciturnity, I gave our good chaplain, Dr. Francis, the hint, who was always ready on these

Colman retired from the turmoil to Bath, and wrote the prologue spoken by Mr. Younger, on opening the Theatre Royal, Liverpool, for the Winter season, in October of this year. His anxious thoughts were now turned to the production of his alteration of Ben Jonson's Epicœne. Garrick alludes to this in the following letter:—

"My Dear Sir, Adelphi, Dec. 20, 1774.

"A thousand thanks, merry Christmasses, and happy New Years to you for your delightful letter. Mrs. Garrick sends the same with great warmth, for your Latin and English, in which she is concerned.

"It was impossible for you to satisfy Cumberland, had the rack forced from you as much falsehood, as he has vanity. I am very glad you have prepared him for me. Had you been as mischievous as you were sincere with him, you might have sent him so high seasoned, and stuffed so full with conceit, that I should have had much ado to lower him. He has behaved so disagreeably with me, that I must have a pluck at his feathers, whether they belong to Terence, Shadwell, or are of his own growth.

"The Two Misers which are to be produced by your late brethren, and written by O'Hara, are from the French of Sedaine, *Les Deux Avares*, a very old improbable piece, but the French music was thought good. Mr. Tighe has endeavoured to make me lose my hold of the Duke of Braganza.* The Barrys are mad about it, and I am very

occasions; and he plied Shuter so freely with claret, that contrary to the adopted adage, which says 'when the wine is in the wit is out,' he was so far inspired with it, as to become not only loquacious, but clever. Upon the Duke's asking him whether he really loved the sport, or only rode for his health? Shuter readily replied, 'My Lord, I am riding for a patent.'"

* Jephson's Tragedy, produced at Drury Lane with great success.

stubborn, not to say cross. If I can get a frank before I close this, you shall see how he has pressed me within these two days. Harlequin's Jacket will make its appearance next Monday. I announced it a few days ago in our paragraph, but it will appear in the bills, a Medley Pantomime, called the New Year's Gift, or Harlequin's Jacket. We shall take half-price, though the scenes are all new. I shall do all I can to produce The Silent Woman this season; but, it will work us much, if we keep Jephson's Tragedy. I shall rely upon your attachment to us, to excuse our deferring it, if we find an absolute necessity for it. The comedy will take thrice the trouble and care of a modern one, to show it as it shall be shewn, and ought to be, coming from you to me. Pray tell me, truly, what you think of Henderson? George is an infidel.

"Pray tell George I have received his letter, and once for all I beg of him not to think of leaving Bath, till he feels and finds himself wholly sound again. If he does, I'll never forgive him. A most disagreeable affair has happened; Mossop, on his death-bed, sends me his play, begging that I would ease his mind in his last moments, by taking it, and doing all in my power with it for the service of his creditors. He is dead, and I have the comedy. I have not yet read a speech; a friend has, and says it is like The Patron, without the humour. What a scrape! More when I see you; when will that be? Pray one letter more, if you follow it the next day. What a scrawl! Love to Foote—*entre nous*, has our friend Foote had some words with a certain Major?

Your's ever,

To George Colman, Esq., Bath. D. Garrick."

George Garrick was not inclined to admit Cumberland's assertion, that Henderson in any way approached his brother David's excellence as an actor. Hence his quality as an infidel.

Garrick appears to have been premature in this notice of Mossop's decease. He died at Chelsea on the 27th of this month, seven days later than the date of this letter. The Rev. David Williams, an Unitarian lecturer, who had attacked Garrick on Mossop's account in a pamphlet, written with consummate ability, apprised Garrick of the tragedian's recantation in his last moments, of the erroneous opinions he had entertained against him. This letter is dated January 7, 1774; and Garrick's reply on the following day is exculpatory of any cause on which Mossop had founded that unkind and unmerited turn of mind against him. "Had I known his distress," he adds, "I should most certainly have relieved it. He was too great a credit to our profession, not to have done all in our power to make him easy at least, if not happy."

Mossop was a remarkable actor. He was born in Dublin, and educated at Trinity College. He was originally designed for the Church, but having seen Garrick act in the Crow-street Theatre, he was incited to turn his thoughts to the stage. This fascination was also increased by observing the abilities of Barry and Sheridan; and notwithstanding all the entreaties of his friends, he made his first appearance in Zanga, at Smock-alley Theatre, in the winter of 1749. Here he immediately established his reputation as a first-rate actor. He then quarrelled with the manager, and came over to England, where he was engaged at Drury Lane Theatre, on advantageous terms. He made his *debût* as "Richard III.," and was received with

universal applause. His next part was Zanga, which was followed by Pierre; Caled in the "Siege of Damascus," the Duke in "Measure for Measure," and Memnon, in the "Ambitious Step Mother."*

He was not satisfied, however, with this success. His ambition led him to aspire to general excellence, and prevented him from sustaining one particular line of his profession.

Although the town and the manager knew Mossop's unfitness for many characters to which he aspired, he would not know it himself. He was ever too much the dupe of his own flattery, and unfortunately he had the assistance of an injudicious friend, a Mr. Fitzpatrick, a critic of some note in his time, who, on some trifling dispute with Garrick, was mean enough to carry his resentments to the actor, and like all men possessed of the spirit of malice, sought his revenge at the expense of his judgment; hence, he exposed himself by daily criticisms on Garrick.

The town laughed at these impotent attempts; but he went on, and Mossop fancying himself injured by Garrick, Fitzpatrick took him up as an engine to fight his own quarrel, and as a new vehicle for his invective. He, therefore, attacked Garrick in newspapers and pamphlets, and so far obtained a victory over him, by raising a party, which succeeded in preventing full price being taken on the night of a revived play, after the third act. Garrick revenged himself by the publication of a poem entitled 'The Fribbleriad,' in which, with considerable vivacity, he plays with the character of 'Fitzgig,' the hero. He

* See Cooke's Life of Macklin.

then let loose his bull-dog, Churchill, at him, who fastened on Fitzpatrick, and almost shook him to pieces. Under such a seducer, Mossop's plain, unsuspicious, yet proud temper, could not long be at rest. He quitted Drury Lane Theatre with disgust, and returned to Ireland, where he was engaged by Barry and Woodward, the joint managers of the Crow Street Theatre, Dublin. Here, though he had a liberal salary, and played with considerable success, the fatal idea of becoming a manager took possession of him. 'There should be but one Theatre in Ireland, and he would be at the head of it.' This was not only the language of his own vanity, but of a number of fashionable females who protected him. It should be observed that Mossop was a handsome man. These ladies, without either judgment or discretion, would take him from a prominent situation to place him in the direction of the Smock Alley Theatre, with all the responsibilities. To induce him to remain, Barry and Woodward offered him one thousand pounds per annum, which was refused by Mossop. A paper war commenced between the parties, of which one couplet (the best) is here preserved,

> "Then as to the public, it is but a toss-up,
> Whether Mossop kick Barry, or Barry kick Mossop."

The end of this speculation was total ruin—a state of bankruptcy; and in this situation, after seven years of management, he returned to London, broken down in spirits and constitution. His friends now advised him to apply to Garrick for an engagement, but his spirit was too high to adopt this course.

With some conscious dignity he replied to his friends, "that Garrick knew very well that he was in London." The manager, however, would not know it without an official notice, consequently Mossop was unemployed.

Another unlucky attempt was made by party and pamphlet to restore Mossop to Drury Lane Theatre, but it failed. His friends then had recourse to Covent Garden, and the managers appeared willing to engage a performer of his merit; but, alas! Mrs. Barry was then the first tragic heroine, and she positively refused to act in any play with the unhappy man. She and her husband had been too deeply injured and annoyed by Mossop in Dublin. This produced a depression of spirits, his mind suffered with his bodily powers, and he moved and talked like a man approaching to melancholy madness.

He saw his dissolution approaching fast, but concealed it, and the extreme poverty of his purse, from his most intimate friends. When his voice was so hollow as to be scarcely audible, he used to say 'he was better;' and when asked about the state of his pecuniary matters, his answer was 'he wanted nothing.' He was found dead in his bed, with only fourpence halfpenny in his possession!*

Mossop was in person of the middle size, well formed, with a face of much expression, and an eagle eye, that evidently marked a proud and independent mind. As an actor, he was accused by the critics of too much mechanism in his action and delivery: his enemies censured the frequent resting

* See Cooke's Life of Macklin.

of his left hand on the hip, with his right extended, which they ludicrously compared to the handle and spout of a tea-pot, whilst others called him the 'distiller of syllables.' We have also heard that his pauses were so intolerably long, that, in the speech of Zanga, in the Revenge, to Alonzo—

"Know, then, 'twas I . . . ",—

the critic avowed, that, at the first word of the speech he might have left the theatre, called a coach, and returned to his box, and still have been in time to have discovered that Zanga 'did it.'

These are evident exaggerations. As an instance of Mossop's absurdity during his management in Dublin, we must relate, that the fame of Bickerstaffe's 'Maid of the Mill' had induced him to announce it for performance at his theatre. He had vocal performers sufficient, and a good band: all the parts were distributed except that of Lord Aimworth. This excited some curiosity amongst the performers, to know who would be the person cast for that part. The secret was, however, kept back till within a few days of the performance, when the bills pompously announced in capitals "the part of Lord Aimworth (*without the songs*) by Mr. Mossop!"*

A trial, of much interest to the theatrical world, came on, in February 1775, in the Court of King's Bench, Westminster, in which five persons were charged with a riot and conspiracy, in causing Mr. Macklin, the comedian, to be dismissed by the patentees of Covent Garden Theatre. The jury, after being out about twenty minutes, brought in

* See Cooke's Life of Macklin.

one of the defendants guilty of the riot, and the four others of the conspiracy. This verdict was accordingly entered up, and the defendants were to receive judgment the second day of the succeeding term.*

Colman at this period was a prominent member of the Literary Club. Mr. Beauclerk, Mr. Langton, Dr. Percy, Mr. Vesey, Sir Charles Bunbury, Dr. George Fordyce, Mr. Steevens, Mr. Charles Fox, Dr. Johnson, and Boswell also belonged to it. The following *bon-mot* by Colman, is recorded by the latter: Colman, in reply to Boswell, having remarked that Johnson on his return from the Hebrides was willing to believe in 'second sight,' Boswell continued, "he is only willing to believe, I *do* believe; the evidence is enough for me, though not for his great mind: what will not fill a quart bottle, will fill a pint bottle—I am filled with belief." "Are you?" said Colman, briskly, "then cork it up."

In April 1775, the farce of Bon Ton was produced on King's benefit night. Garrick was the concealed author, and the prologue was written by Colman.

The following letter, in the hand-writing of Garrick, was doubtless a *ruse:* that his prompter, or other retainers, by whom it might be seen, should be kept in the dark.

"Drury Lane Playhouse.

"The Author of 'Bon Ton' presents his best compliments and thanks to Mr. Colman for his excellent prologue, and would wish to add to the obligation, by desiring him to look over the farce, and draw his pencil through the parts which his judgment would omit in the next representation.

* This riot took place on the 13th November, 1773.

"Mr. Garrick not being present at the representation, he likewise should be very happy if Mr. Colman would show his regard to him, and take the trouble which is wanting to make 'Bon Ton' palatable.

"Mr. Garrick will do more, or any thing, at any time, to show his attachment to his old friend."

Garrick set out for Bath on March 28th, whence Colman received the subjoined epistle:

"Dear Colman, Bath, April 10th, 1775.

"When I see you, I will talk over in friendly conference the subject of your last letter. I am at present very oddly situated; but, as I shall always wish to second your desires whenever I can, without injury to myself, which I am sure you always imply at the time you let me know them, I must open my heart to you, and beg that it may be shut up to everybody else. Smith cannot, with the people whom the managers have engaged, be employed at Covent Garden. He has offered himself to me, by my brother, in a fit of honour, or compunction. I still keep aloof, and have written a very spirited and refusing letter to him. This, my policy and my spirit required; but I will not hide a thought from you: I really think we cannot do without him, and if so, for Henderson is yet disengaged, how can I make it worth Barry's while to change his situation? However, let matters rest a little; the theatrical face of things may be greatly altered before we meet, for I give you up, and the pleasure of seeing you here. I must entreat your secrecy in this affair, and you shall know all my politics and engagements, when I see you.

Ever your's,

D. G."

Wilkes, who had been in the preceding November elected to the civic chair, gave an entertainment at the Mansion House, on the 18th of April, 1775,

which for magnificence exceeded by far all that had ever been seen at the Easter balls. Every thing was displayed with the greatest taste, and the company were many of them of high distinction. The Duke of Leinster and Miss Wilkes (the Mayor's sister), as Lady Mayoress, opened the ball with a minuet; and Lord Mahon danced another with Miss Wilkes, his daughter. Among the persons invited were Prince Pallavicini, the late Pope's nephew, Governor Johnstone, Boswell, and Colman. At dinner, Boswell, who had secured ample room for himself at the best table, perceiving Colman in want of a place, called to him, and seated him beside himself, observing, "see what it is to have a Scotchman for your friend at Mr. Wilkes's table." A foreign waiter passing soon after, with some viands, Boswell spoke to him in German. When Colman hinted to Boswell that he had certainly mistaken the place that day: "I thought I was at the Mansion House, but must surely be at St. James's, for here are nothing but Germans and Scots!" Colman's witticism has been recorded as 'a tiny joke,' in a ludicrous adaptation of Sir John Suckling's verses, entitled

THE LADY MAYORESS'S ROUT.

"I'll tell thee, Ned, where I have been,
Where I such charming girls have seen,
As ne'er were seen before:
They were so fair, and full of tricks,
I thought I'd cross'd the river Styx,
And gain'd the Elysian shore.

" The Lady May'ress, first of maids,
Admir'd by sages, cits, and blades,
Is such a *rara avis:*
That, could you hear the angel speak,
No more you'd rhyme to Kitty's cheek,
Or toast the fair Poll Davis.

" She 's all politeness, ease, and wit,
Admir'd by courtier and by cit,
And ev'ry girl surpasses:
In filial piety she leads;
She beats the Roman, Grecian deeds;
Nay, tops the Pindus lasses.

" Your country dowdies praise no more,
Come up—she 'll teach you to adore,
What's bad in you she'll mend:
She's an example to her race,
For virtue, gratitude, and grace;
The woman and the friend.

" You will excuse my old rough style,
At which, I 'm sure she 'll only smile;
For poetry like mine,
Should not be brought before her eyes;
She is so clever, smart, and wise,
In one, she 's all the nine.

" But as these lines will ne'er appear,
To any other eye or ear,
Thou wilt not let 'em out;
Therefore, my lad, attend the song,
I'll tell thee of the motley throng,
At Lady May'ress' rout.

" We clamber'd up a flight of stairs,
Like monsters to the ark in pairs,
Promiscuously together;
I'm sure there was, dear boy, at least,
Ten handsome birds to every beast,
And all, too, in full feather.

" But when we gain'd the grand saloon,
The fiddles soon began to tune,
The birds and beasts to prance;
And Ned, I saw, upon my word,
An alderman lead out a bird,*
An ostrich, sure, to dance.

" So sweet a creature ne'er was seen,
Of colours crimson, red, blue, green,
So beautiful and nice:
But people, who knew more than me,
Said, that it came beyond the sea,
A bird of paradise.

" The painter draws, the poet sings,
And they give angels golden wings,
To please the gaping crowd:
She prov'd the brush and pencil right,
And seem'd an angel, dropp'd that night,
From some soft, fleecy cloud.

" Others there were, with feathers too,
Indeed they neither danc'd or flew,
Cotillions, allemands, and reels:
For them, I wish'd, with all my heart,
Their heads would with their feathers part,
To lighten all their heels.

" Though laureates periodic sing
Of Charlotte queen and George the king,
Yet these surpass in all:
For courtiers meaning to be witty,
Came down to ridicule the city,
Yet prais'd them and the ball.

" Indeed, such charming, beauteous girls,
Such feathers, jewels, lace, and pearls,
I never saw together:
Such foreigners, such stars, and strings,
Such men, and aldermen, and things
In full fur and full feather.

* Miss Asgill, daughter of Alderman Asgill.

" D'Eon, that mixture of a man,
Something between a fish and swan,
Look'd very gay in red;
St. Louis' order grac'd his coat,
To show that he had served and fought,
But did not prove he 'd bled.

" Sam Foote, that merry wag, was here,
He laugh'd and grinn'd from ear to ear,
And laid his wit amain;
They gap'd and swallowed all he said,
But they by far were too well bred
To bring up aught again.

" Colman, he crack'd a tiny joke,
And Boswell cursed broad Scotch spoke
In Dr. Johnson's praise;
But still he damn'd his Hebrides,
Which proved poor Scotland had no trees;
Not for their poets' bays.

" Dick Twiss, the classic and the vain,
Talk'd of his voyage to Lisbon, Spain;
To make his friends full glad:
But had it been thy cursed fate,
To read his work and hear him prate,
By Jove 't had made thee mad!

" By three next morn the rout was done,
For want of wine—we wanted fun;
There was no spur to vice;
Three pretty maids, gay, debonnaire,
Served us with tea and capillaire,
And kept us cool with ice."

We now resume Garrick's lively correspondence to Colman, from Bath.

" My dear Colman,

" Your very friendly and agreeable letter came to my hand

in a very lucky moment. I had been numbed as a Maccaroni, I should have said, bored to death by old Doctor Barry, for an hour and a half; so that had not you electrified me, I had perished. Your illness alarmed me, and your scheme with Captain Phipps to the North Pole, freezes about my heart.

" I despair of seeing you here, so that I must beat the parade with the folks here, whose conversation lies as heavy upon my mind as the hot cakes and devilments at breakfast upon my stomach. I have seen the great Henderson, who has something, and is nothing. He might be made to figure among the puppets of these times. His Don John is a comic Cato; and his Hamlet, a mixture of tragedy, comedy, pastoral, farce, and nonsense. However, though my wife is outrageous, I am in the secret, and see sparks of fire which might be blown, to warm even a London audience at Christmas. He is a dramatic phenomenon, and his friends, but more particularly Cumberland, have ruined him. He has a manner of paving, when he would be emphatical, that is ridiculous, and must be changed, or he would not be suffered at the Bedford Coffee House.

" Palmer goes on well, and will be elected into the Corporation. I am kissing old women, and giving young ones the liberty of Drury Lane Theatre, by way of bribery and corruption. It is the fashion, you know, for Punch to do this business at elections, and Palmer cannot have a better. Joking apart, I am really become a Punch. I have gained two inches in the waist, and the girls at night call me fatty! I wish you had seen Joshua's play. Your opinion would have confirmed me. I hate this traffic with friends.

" I long to be at Gray's Memoirs; you have made me smack my lips. Mason is certainly peevish, but I think there is poetry about him. When shall I devour the true Art of Poetry? I dreamed of it some nights ago; it is a special business for your genius, and worthy of you. How

like you Master Twiss? Your intelligence about the dedication is erroneous.*

Mrs. Garrick sends her love to you, but says with me, that you are a false loon, and will not see Bath this Spring.

DAVID GARRICK."

"MY DEAR COLMAN, Bath, April 20, 1775.

"I have waited till this moment to ascertain my time of leaving this place, but till my brother George quits me the beginning of next week, I shall not be able to fix the day.

"You may depend upon my staying at least ten days after the date you receive this, but if you cannot be here before the end of next week, unless your health requires your coming, I would not wish to see you here for a few days; for that will be tantalizing me with a vengeance, and the result will be that I shall only have a taste of you here, and lose my meal of you in town. I must be in London on the 18th of May, for the fund, and I am not certain whether I shall not shew myself on the 9th, for that is one of our days, and I am afraid to take the chance of the plays we can act without me; but of this I am not yet determined. Should you not have set out before George arrives in town, which will be on Thursday next, he will tell you all. If I see you here before then, I will, by Jasus, tell you all myself. Pray let Becket shew you the last card

* Sir Joshua Reynolds wrote an introductory letter to Garrick, accompanying his nephew's play, entitled 'Zaphira;' but Garrick's opinion was not in its favour. A theatrical manager is often placed in very unpleasant predicaments, by having to decide against the notions or interests of his best friends. The allusion to 'Master Twiss,' appertains to Richard Twiss, who had then published his Travels through Portugal and Spain. The preface is dated from Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, March 26, 1775, and from the notice in the letter, appears to have had some dedication, without which the volume appeared. Possibly Colman had heard it was to have been dedicated to Garrick.

I received from Smith, which I shall not answer. I have some small suspicions about that business which Becket will explain. 'The Inflexible Captive,' has been played here with success, and I touched up Mrs. Didier with an Epilogue, which had a good reception. Henderson played Regulus, and you would have wished him bunged up with his nails before the end of the third act.

"Palmer's election for Common Council-man comes on to-morrow; he has brought down Lord Camden to ensure him success, and he will have it. What a stirring, indefatigable fellow it is!

"I will tell you a secret, brother Martin, that shall make your hair stand on end! I believe I may engage the blood of the Linleys! Do not let one syllable of this transpire till the deed is done!

Your's ever, D. GARRICK."

'The Inflexible Captive' was a tragedy by Miss Hannah More. It was acted one night only at the Bath Theatre. Regulus, on whose story it was founded, was the principal part in the drama. Palmer was the manager of the Theatre Royal, Bath, at the time.

On the 11th of May, 1775, Mr. Justice Aston reported to the Court of King's Bench, his minutes of the evidence on the trial of the five persons in the preceding February, four of whom were convicted of a conspiracy and riot, and the fifth of a riot only, in Covent Garden Theatre on the 18th of November, 1773, with intent to drive Mr. Macklin from the stage. Lord Mansfield observed on the nature of the offence, called it a national disgrace, and reprobated the conduct of the parties concerned in it. He said, that in

the first stage of the business he had urgently advised the defendants to make Mr. Macklin adequate compensation for the great damage which he had sustained; that he then particularly pointed out as an advisable measure the saving of the costs, by putting an end to the matter at once; that the law expenses were now swelled to an enormous sum, which sum the defendants had themselves given rise to by their want of prudence. Some time was spent by the Court in endeavouring to make an amicable adjustment of the matter, and a final conclusion of it. Mr. Colman was proposed as arbiter-general, to which the defendants agreed, but Mr. Colman declined the office. At length Mr. Macklin, after recapitulating his grievances, informed the Court, that to show he was no way revengeful, with which he had been charged, he would be satisfied if the defendants paid his law expenses, took 100*l.* worth of tickets on the night of his daughter's benefit, 100*l.* worth on the night of his own benefit, and another 100*l.* on one of the managers' nights, when he should play. This plan, he observed, was not formed on mercenary views; its basis was to give the defendants popularity, and restore mutual amity. Lord Mansfield paid Mr. Macklin some compliments on the honourable complexion and singular moderation of this proposal, and declared that it did him the highest credit; that generosity was universally admired in this country, and that there was no doubt but the public at large would honour and applaud him for his lenity. His lordship added further, that notwithstanding his acknowledged

abilities as an actor, he never acted better in his life than he had done that day. The proposal was accepted by the parties, and the matter thus ended. During the course of the business, Lord Mansfield took occasion to observe, that the right of hissing and applauding in a theatre was an unalterable right, but that there was a wide distinction between expressing the natural sensations of the mind as they arose from what was seen and heard, and executing a preconcerted design not only to hiss an actor when he was playing a part, but also to drive him from the Theatre, and promote his utter ruin.

After the above decision, the managers of Covent Garden Theatre met, and generously agreed to give up their claim to the 100*l.* worth of tickets.

The next letter from Garrick is dated from the Adelphi, June 25th, 1775.

"My Dear Friend,

"We wanted you much at the election to-day. Foote was in great spirits, but bitter against the Lord Chamberlain. He will bully them into a licence. The Duchess has had him in her closet, and offered to bribe him; but Cato himself, though he had one more leg than our friend, was not more stoically virtuous than he has been. You shall know all when I see you.

We will most certainly attend you on Tuesday next. It is scarcely possible for me to refuse dining with you any where, but with Mr. Baldwin. I will not ever again attend those meetings, though I have been very happy among my friends there. I have been insulted greatly: first to have a paper, in which I have a property, abuse me for puffing myself, and then I am supposed the author of a paragraph or letter in the Morning Chronicle, which the printer him-

self almost avows, and which by my honour I never heard of till you mentioned it to me. I have done my share to the paper, nay, I have told that worthy gentleman, Mr. Baldwin, that I would look out things whenever he was in want of nonsense; but I give the matter up now, and as he may be assured, I will trouble myself no more about it. He may abuse me as fast as he pleases; I do not expect mercy from such gentry for past services. This you may say or read as you please.

"I long for the 'Saucy Gentleman.' Becket will let me have it as soon as he can.

"Your's, in great haste, your servant waiting at the door.

D. G."

The Duchess of Kingston returned from France, after having been abroad for two years, on the 20th of May. Her Grace surrendered herself to the Court of King's Bench to answer the charge of bigamy, and was bailed by Lord Hillsborough and the Duke of Newcastle. She was to be tried by the Peers, a circumstance which Foote had wove up in ludicrous detail for dramatic representation, under the title of 'The Trip to Calais.' This piece the Lord Chamberlain refused to license. Foote failed in his endeavours, but after much altercation, it was produced under the title of 'The Capuchin.'

The 'Saucy Gentleman,' noticed in Garrick's letter, was a periodical paper entitled 'The Gentleman,' by Colman, under the signature of 'The Blackguard,' originally printed in the London Packet newspaper, and continued at intervals between July and December in this year.

We cannot do better than introduce, in this place, George Colman the Younger's account of this period of his life, as it also will give glimpses of the character of his father, and his friends.

"In the midsummer holidays of the year 1775, I started in high glee, on a tour to the north of England; my father being, as usual, quarter-master and paymaster.

"We travelled leisurely, and in a zig-zag direction, our course beginning North North-West, and, on the evening of our first day's progress, we halted at Oxford. On our arrival we took up our rest in a dull, eccentric part of the town, at a decayed, old-fashioned inn, the name of the sign has escaped my memory; execrable in point of eating, drinking, and every accommodation, all of which 'that most venerable man, which I did call my father,' pronounced to be capital. This surprised me, as he was very delicate in his feeding, and precise in all his appointments at home; but I soon discovered that this receptacle for man and horse had been the bang-up house of entertainment when he was a student of Christchurch. He, therefore, such is the force of first impressions, and of early habits, insisted upon its present pre-eminence; and he had rattled up to it, after a lapse of twenty years, in a post-chaise and four, although it was then only frequented by stage-coaches, commercial riders with saddle-bags, and all sorts of scrub-travellers.

"We sat down to the eternal dinner at a bad inn, smoked black mutton-chops, with a tough broiled fowl, looking like the abortion of a spread-eagle,

sprinkled with musty pickled mushrooms. These dainties were served up on a short table-cloth, furnished with spoonless salt-cellars, and two-pronged steel forks. Pater looked a little queer, but was firm to his principles ; he had been brought up in the heathen religion of this inn, and was determined not to be an apostate.

" After dinner the landlord came smirking into the room with a smeared decanter, containing some sloe-juice, which he called a bottle of his *supernaculum*. This beverage was light and fiery, like all the road-port, with some flakes in it, which my father pronounced to be the *véritable* bee's wing ; and he despatched the waiter to Mr. Jackson, the then Oxford printer, begging that he would come and help him to drink it. This invitation was accepted, and Jackson speedily made his appearance : a deed of kindness, and proof of a daring stomach ; for the printer knew every house in the town, and was aware of the poison he was about to swallow. The immediate news and gossip of Oxford having been primarily discussed, my sire and the master of devils entered into a long prose upon times gone by, wherein it appeared that Jackson had been originally employed in printing the periodical work of ' The Connoisseur,' of which my father and Bonnell Thornton were the authors ; and in the confabulation between my father and Jackson, I learned that, in the above-mentioned joint production, Master Bonnell was most incorrigibly lazy, and threw very much more than a proportionate share of the drudgery upon his literary colleague.

"On starting this publication, the authors were pledged, as is usual in periodical writings, to produce a certain quantity of letter-press on certain days; but when the *onus* fell upon Thornton to provide materials, he waddled out, like a lame duck in the alley; that is, he was delinquent, after having promised to be punctual; and, at almost the very last moment, his partner was left to supply his deficiency. On one of these occasions the joint authors met, in hurry and irritation, to extricate themselves from the dilemma; my father enraged or sulky, Thornton muzzy with liquor: the essay to be published on the next morning: not a word of it written, nor even a subject thought on, and the press waiting: nothing to be done but to scribble helter skelter. 'Sit down, Colman,' said Thornton, 'by 'od!* we must give the blockheads something.' My industrious sire, conscious of obligations to be fulfilled, sat down immediately, writing whatever came into his head, *currente calamo*. Thornton in the mean time walked up and down, taking huge pinches of snuff, seeming to ruminate, but not suggesting one word, or contributing one thought. When my father had thrown upon paper about half of a moral Essay, Thornton, who was still pacing the room, with a glass of brandy and water in his hand, stuttered out, 'Write away, Colman! by 'od! you are a bold fellow! you can tell them that virtue is a fine thing;' implying that my father wrote

* 'By 'od!' was his favourite apostrophe; he spoke inarticulately, and clipped many of his words.

nothing but mere common-place, and instructed his readers in what every body knew before.

" This somewhat recondite sarcasm came ludicrously enough from a man who, through his own default in moral principle, was pushing his partner to save the credit of both of them, at a minute's warning.

" I believe that, after this joint concern, the intimacy of the colleagues, though they were always upon good terms, was not kept up; nor was it likely to be, with two persons of such different habits, except in the pursuits of literature. I have no recollection of having ever seen Thornton at my father's house. Not long before Thornton's death, these two quondam co-partners had occasion to meet in London on some business at a tavern; their interview was at noon, and Thornton came half-drunk! During their conversation upon the business which had brought them together, my father observed to his old friend, that he regretted to see he by no means appeared in good health. 'Health!' said Thornton, 'look here!' and he pointed to his ancles, which were alarmingly swollen; 'can't you see? 'tis the dropsy; by 'od! I'm a-going:' and going he was, for he died shortly afterwards.

" When Thornton was on his death-bed, his relations surrounding it, he told them that he should expire before he had counted twenty; and covering his head with the bed-clothes, he began to count 'one, two, on to twenty;' he then thrust out his head, exclaiming, 'By 'od! it 's very strange! but why are n't you all crying? Teach my son,' said

he to the bystanders, 'when I am gone, his A, B, C, I know mine in several languages; but I perceive no good that the knowledge has done me; so, if you never teach him his A, B, C, at all, it don't much signify.' Within an hour after this, poor Bonnell Thornton breathed his last. This is dreadful! to see a man of learning and genius, lost and besotted, at an age when his talents and experience should have elevated him to many years' enjoyment of the world's admiration and respect, to see him on the brink of a premature grave, looking down, like an idiot, into the 'narrow dwelling,' and beholding it with fevered levity! can there be a more mortifying picture of frail humanity?

"Having passed two days in viewing the Oxford *lions*, to whose den it was intended that, on leaving Westminster, I should in due time be consigned, we proceeded to Woodstock, that spot sacred to the Deities of Love, Poetry, and War; for there the bower of the hapless Rosamond was constructed; there was Chaucer born; there, too, the palace proudly stands, reared by England's gratitude in honour of a Marlborough, whose military science and success could only be surpassed by the tactics and triumphs of a Wellington.

"From Woodstock we pursued our winding way through Warwickshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, and Lancashire, till we entered Yorkshire; but as I am not writing an itinerary, and as most of the towns and places of note in this serpentine tour are familiar to everybody, though marvellous then to me, I say no more of them, than that, at Stratford-

upon-Avon, I was more delighted with a cold round of beef at the White Lion, than inspired by the birth-place of our great dramatic bard.

"Of other places which we visited, Warwick, Warwick Castle, Birmingham, Lichfield, Derby, Chatsworth, Matlock, Buxton, Castleton, Liverpool, *cum aliis*, to say they made me stare, will be quite enough.

"Of adventures, as we marched 'thus far into the bowels of the land,' and we marched literally into its bowels at Buxton, and again at Castleton, I have none to record, except that I was nearly burned to death in the water, in that part of the Peak which is called after a portion of the Devil's person, and which must be indispensable to him in a sedentary position.

"This far-famed cavern, one of the Seven Wonders* of Derbyshire, consists chiefly of two compartments; and, to make myself clear to the reader, in describing the awkward situation in which I was placed, I offer him a short transcript from an old book.†

* The Seven Wonders. Hobbes has comprehended the whole in one verse:—

Ædes, mons, barathrum, binus fons, antraque bina.

These, taken in the order of the above hexameter, are,—Chatsworth, the Seat of the Duke of Devonshire; Mam Tor, or the Mother Rock; Eldon Hole; the Springs at Matlock at Buxton; Poole's Hole, and the Devil's ————

† De Foe's Tour through the Island of Great Britain, continued by Richardson, author of 'Clarissa,' &c. Eighth edition. 1778.

"'On the steep side of a mountain at Castleton, in Derbyshire, is a large opening, almost in the form of a Gothic arch, upwards of thirty feet perpendicular, and twice as much broad at the bottom at least, and wider, it is said, than any artificial arch now to be seen. It continues thus wide but a little way, yet far enough to have several small cottages built on either side of it within the entrance, like a town in a vault. On the left side, as it were, of the street, is a running stream of water. As you go on, the roof descends gradually, and is then so far from having houses, that a man cannot stand upright in it, though in the water; but stooping for a little way, and then passing over, in a kind of bathing-tub, wherein you lie extended, the stream of water which crosses the cave, you find more room over your head.'

"To cross the running stream here noticed, I was placed flat upon my back in the boat, or 'bathing-tub,' above-mentioned; the bottom of it was stuffed, like that of a hackney-coach, with musty straw and hay, and as I lay thus supine, I held a lighted tallow-candle in my hand, without which, bating the distant gleams from a few more candles, carried by other travellers, and their attendants, I should have been in utter darkness.

"The Charon of this Castleton Styx was not exactly such a ferryman as his prototype, his passengers were all alive, and he neither navigated with a sail, as you do in a ship, nor with a pole, as

in a punt,* but he waded in the subterranean rivulet, which I do not think was more than three feet deep, and propelled his crazy bark with his hands, at the stern. In fact, he called himself the guide, an Irish one in this instance, as, instead of showing you the way, he walked after you. He proved himself, notwithstanding, very expert, as it will appear in the accident which befel me: I know not whether his adroitness arose from presence of mind, or from frequent practice in similar misadventures.

"I had accomplished half the *trajet* of a voyage, little longer than a hop, step, and a jump, when the lighted candle in my hand set fire to the combustible matter on which I was deposited; and the whole vessel, where I lay like an egg in a bird's-nest, was instantly in a blaze. Charon never once thought of burning his fingers by endeavouring to pick me out of the conflagration; but, having already hold of the stern, he gave it a sudden violent twist, which turned the boat topsy-turvy, and shot me headlong into the stream. Falstaff's transition from the buck-basket to the Thames was nothing to it; down I went with a hiss, in the midst of flaming hay and straw, to the bottom, "think of that, hissing hot! think of that, Master Brook!"

"I emerged, in a few seconds, extinguished and cooled. There was nothing further to be done but

* Virgil tells us, that the fabulous Charon was in the habit of both sailing and punting.

"Ipse ratem conto subigit, velisque ministrat."

ÆNEID, lib. 6, v. 301.

to hurry me back to the inn, for a change of clothes, after a decided ducking. Between the two elements, I might have fared worse; for considering the fright on one hand, and the indurating quality of the Derbyshire springs on the other, the chances were that I had come out of the water completely petrified.

"The big-wigged classical folks shall never 'flout me out of my humour.' They may say what they please to explode tragi-comedy from the regular drama; but I do maintain that there seldom is a grave distress in real life, which does not produce something of the ludicrous either in itself, or in some of the bearings upon it. If this be admitted, together with the Shakspearean axiom, that, the Stage is to 'hold a mirror up to Nature,' it is a stronger argument in favour of tragi-comedy than any which its learned opponents have advanced against it."

CHAPTER XI.

Odd travelling party—Captain Phipps—Sir Joseph Banks—Omai, the Otaheitan—Visit to Scarborough—Novel mode of Sea-bathing—Up-gang—Mulgrave—Scotch tumble—Tumuli—Collectors of Coins—Otaheitan Cookery—Omai's Cuisine—Savage Sportsmanship—Mutual Instruction—Origin of the Hamiltonian System—Crazy Hall—Sir Charles Turner—The Father of Captain Cook—Cocken Hall—Lady Mary Carr—Joe Miller—Lord Darlington—Raby Castle.

"We arrived a day or two before the races at York," says George Colman, jun., "where my father had promised to meet his friend, Captain Phipps, and to accompany him with others, when the races were over, further north, to Mulgrave, near Whitby; we proceeded accordingly.

"Our party consisted of Captain Phipps, afterwards Lord Mulgrave; his youngest brother Augustus, a boy of my own age; Mr. afterwards Sir Joseph Banks; my father, myself, and Omai, the Otaheitan.

"How it happened that such a seemingly heterogeneous half dozen should be packed up together in a close carriage, upon the King's highway, is to be explained. The three principals of the party, a naval officer, a naturalist, and a dramatic poet, were intimate friends, and not so distinct in their worldly pursuits as would appear upon a superficial view of

the matter; for it is to be recollected, that the honourable Captain was, according to a late Irish gentleman's pseudography '*bread* to the sea;'* the naturalist, having botanized and philosophised all round the world, had, of course, navigated the sea;† and the dramatic poet was, at least while he presided over a theatre, an absolute Neptune: commanding sundry seas of paint and pasteboard to roll, or not to roll, as he thought fit. In respect to the remaining three, the two boys, my dear departed friend Augustus Phipps, and myself, were under the separate control of an elder brother, and a father; and, as to Omai, Sir Joseph Banks having received him 'neat as imported,' had made himself his bear-leader and guardian.‡

* In allusion to the following well-known story:—The Irish gentleman had betted that a certain witty Post Captain, afterwards an Admiral, and since dead, was not originally intended for the sea service. He, therefore, wrote to him, requesting to know whether he was "*bread* to the sea." The answer was, "I am not bread to the sea, but the sea is bread to me, and d—d bad bread it is."

† He sailed with Captain Cook, when he performed his first voyage round the world, on board the Endeavour. The ship quitted Plymouth on the 26th of August, 1768, and returned to England, coming to anchor in the Downs, on the 12th July, 1771. Sir Joseph, then Mr. Banks, engaged to accompany him on this expedition, his friend Doctor Solander, a learned Swede of much philosophical celebrity, who held a place in the British Museum, and who had studied under the great Linnæus. Sir Joseph had also in his suite two draughtsmen; one who painted subjects of natural history, the other landscapes and figures; a secretary, and four servants.

‡ Lord Sandwich, Doctor Solander, and Sir Joseph Banks, but chiefly the latter, were the three protectors of Omai, during his sojournment here. He was brought over to this country in 1774, by Captain Furneaux, who went out in 1772, on board the Adventure, in company with the Resolution; in which last vessel

"The coach in which we rumbled from York was the ponderous property of Sir Joseph, and as huge and heavy as a broad-wheeled waggon; but, however ill-constructed for a quick conveyance over the rough roads and sharp acclivities which we had to encounter, its size was by no means too large for its contents. It carried, as I have shown, six inside passengers, with much more than their average luggage; for the packages of Captain Phipps, who intended to make some stay at Mulgrave, and who was ardent in his professional studies, were laid in like stores for a long voyage; he had boxes and cases crammed with nautical lore, books, maps, charts, quadrants, telescopes, &c. Sir Joseph's stowage was still more formidable; unwearied in botanical research, he travelled with trunks containing voluminous specimens of his *hortus siccus* in whitey-brown paper; and large receptacles for further vegetable materials, which he might accumulate in his locomotions. The vehicle had also, in addition to its contingent loads, several fixed appurtenances with which it was encumbered by its philosophical owner: in particular there was a remarkably heavy safety-chain, a drag-chain upon

Captain Cook performed his second voyage. The two ships separated in a storm, and the Adventure came home about a year sooner than the Resolution. Omai, though generally called in England an Otaheitan, appears to have been a native of Ulietea, but with connexions and relatives in Otaheite. On Captain Cook's third voyage, in 1777, he took Omai back to his native clime, to settle him somewhere. Otaheite was first tried, where Omai behaved like a fool, and was pigeoned by his countrymen. Uliteea was then speculated upon, at last the captain fixed him in Huaheine, where he left him. In April 1777, advices were received of his death.

a newly constructed principle, to obviate the possibility of danger in going down a hill; which snapped short, however, in our very first descent, whereby the carriage ran over the postboy, who drove the wheelers, and the chain of safety very nearly crushed him to death. It boasted, also, an internal piece of machinery with a hard name, a *hippopedometer*, or some such Greek coinage, by which a traveller might ascertain the precise rate at which he was going, in the moment of his consulting it. This also broke in the first ten miles of our journey, whereat the philosopher to whom it belonged was the only person who lost his philosophy. Most gentlemen who go post in their own carriages have a watch, it enables them to tell how many miles they have driven in an hour, without reference to casual inequalities of pace; knowing, therefore, the character of their speed in the aggregate, they have little occasion, or desire, to analyze trot by decomposing it into footsteps.

"Our progress, under all its cumbrous circumstances, was still further retarded by Sir Joseph's indefatigable propensity for botany. We never saw a tree with an unusual branch, or a strange weed, or anything singular in the vegetable world, but a halt was immediately ordered, out jumped Sir Joseph, out jumped the two boys Augustus and myself, after him, and out jumped Omai, after us all. Many articles, 'all a growing, and a growing,' which seemed to me no better than thistles, and which would not have sold for a farthing in Covent Garden Market, were pulled up by the roots, and stowed carefully in the coach, as rarities.

" Among all our jumpings, the most amusing to me was the jump of a frog down the throat of the said Sir Joseph; he held it in the palm of his hand, having picked it up in the grass, till it performed this guttural somerset, to convince his three followers, the two boys, and the savage,* that there is nothing poisonous in this animal, as some very ignorant people imagine; as far, therefore, as enlightening the minds of a couple of lads, belonging to the rising generation of England, the frog took his voluntary leap of self-destruction, like another Curtius, for the good of his country.

" Instead of pursuing the direct inland route, through Malton and Pickering, to Whitby, we travelled coastward: at an elevated point of the road, not far from Scarborough, they told me, that there was a peep at the German Ocean: never having beheld the sea, I thrust my head out at the coach-window, with extreme eagerness. My notions of the 'vasty deep' were formed upon Latin poetical descriptions, which had been whipped into me at Westminster; and I had, moreover, lately read George Alexander Stevens's song, of 'The Storm,' in which he writes of

" The tempest-troubled ocean,
Where the seas contend with skies,"

accordingly, I looked up to the sky, which hap-

* Colman designates Omai as a savage, and consequently suggests an idea, that he was a half-naked, ruthless companion: on the contrary, he was dressed while in England, in a reddish brown coat and breeches, with a white waistcoat, made in the English manner, and in which he appeared perfectly easy. His hair jet black, strong and shining, was, after his arrival here, clubbed behind.

pened to be particularly serene and unclouded, and the seas were not contending with it at all. I concluded, like the wise Governor of Tilbury Fort, in respect to the Spanish Fleet, that the German Ocean—

> "I could not see, because
> It was not yet in sight."

But being directed to cast my eyes lower, I observed a wide horizontal expanse of untroubled liquid, which disappointed me hugely; and I peremptorily pronounced that the sea was nothing more than a very great puddle; an opinion which must have somewhat astounded the high naval officer, who had not long returned from his celebrated Voyage of Discovery, towards the North Pole,* and the Philosopher who had circumnavigated the globe.

"Whether my ideas, on this subject, had arisen from too much or too little fancy, it is not for me to determine; it must have been from either one or the other: the poets had either set my mind like their own eyes, 'in a fine frenzy rolling,' or I was stupid enough to receive all their fine tropes and figures, for downright matters of fact.

"Be this as it may, on reaching the inn at Scarborough, I ran immediately to the beach; and was soon convinced that the puddle was, as the late

* The Hon. Capt. Constantine John Phipps, on board the Racehorse, accompanied by Capt. Lutwyche, in the Carcass, sailed on a Voyage for a discovery of a North-east Passage to the North Pole, in the beginning of June 1773. The ships became so entangled in the ice, that their escape was almost miraculous:—This expedition is mentioned as remarkable in naval records, from the extreme perils attending it, the skill and calm resolution of Capt. Phipps, and the gallantry of all the officers and men under his command.

George Hanger wrote of an army of many thousand men, ' not to be sneezed at.'

" Some lounging fishermen laughed at the questions which I put to them about the surface of the sea, and told me that it was, then, a dead calm. I gazed over the tranquil but immense world of waters, the *mira quies pelagi*, and it seemed the repose of an elemental terror, which the Almighty had lulled into an awful rest. The tide was at flow, making a sleepy stealth upon the shore; but the broad bulky waves came smoothly gliding in, like placid giants, and impressed me with a fearful conception of their grandeur, if vexed by a gale, and of their fury, when driven by a tempest.

" Early next morning, I was again upon the beach; to take a dip, as the cockneys call it, in the usual watering-place way. I was upon the point of making my maiden plunge from a bathing-machine, into the briny flood, when Omai appeared wading before me. The coast of Scarborough having an eastern aspect, the early sunbeams shot their lustre upon the tawny Otaheitan, and heightened the cutaneous gloss which he had already received from the water: he looked like a specimen of pale moving mahogany, highly varnished; not only varnished indeed, but curiously veneered, for, from his hips, and the small of his back, downwards, he was tattooed with striped arches, broad and black, by means of a sharp shell, or a fish's tooth, imbued with an indelible die, according to the fashion of his country. He hailed me with the salutation of Tosh, which was his pronunciation of George,* and uttered certain sounds

* Omai's Address to the King, on his being introduced by

approaching to the articulation of 'back—swim—I—me—carry you.' This attempt at the English language, became intelligible to me from his suiting the action to the utterance, or rather elucidating the utterance by the action; and the proposition was, that he should swim out to sea with me. I was 'not John O'Gaunt; but no coward, Hal!' and, considering that I had never yet ventured into the sea, had never beheld it till the preceding day, that I had been drowned, about a month before, in the Thames, not to mention my recent ducking in Derbyshire; that the person to whose care I committed myself, in so novel and nervous an exploit, was almost a stranger, and that stranger a savage; all this taken into consideration, my immediate acceptance of his offer, by springing out of the bathing-machine upon his back, may be looked upon as a bold measure, rather than otherwise.

"The Scarborough Sands presented, as they still do, it is to be hoped, for the benefit of the bathers there, a hard surface, beautifully level, which extended with a gentle declivity, very far into the sea. Omai, therefore, who was highly pleased with my confidence in him, walked a considerable way before the water came up to his chin; he then struck out; and having thus weighed anchor for this my first voyage, I found myself on board the Omai, decidedly not as commander of the vessel, but as a

Lord Sandwich, then First Lord of the Admiralty, was "How do, King Tosh?" He had formed a droll idea of the kingly power. When first introduced to Lord Sandwich, he pointed to the butler as King of the bottles; said Captain Fourneaux was King of the Ship; and Lord Sandwich, King of all the Ships.—Ed.

passive passenger, who must submit, without effort, to the very worst that could happen. My wild friend appeared as much at home upon the waves as a rope-dancer upon a cord; but, as soon as he had got out of his depth, my apprehensions were aroused, and I began to think, that if he should take a sudden fancy to dive, or to turn round and float with his face towards the sky, I, who was upon his back, must be in a very awkward situation. Every fresh motion of his arms and legs, carried us some yards further out; and, in the intervals of these efforts, he constantly cried, 'Tosh, not fraid;' but George was afraid, and plaguily frightened indeed, that is the plain truth. After a time, however, we went on so steadily, that my fears gradually subsided, and I listened tranquilly to the jargon of my vehicle, who taught me several words in his own language, which had all some reference to our immediate circumstances, and meant swim, drown, boat, ship, fishes, &c.

"At last, I felt not only quite at ease, but delighted with my mode of vectigation: it had doubtless one advantage over sailing in a ship, for there was no rolling and pitching about, to occasion sea-sickness; and I made my way as smoothly as Arion upon his Dolphin. I could not, indeed, touch the lyre, nor had I any musical instrument to play upon, unless it were the comb which Omai carried in one hand, and which he used while swimming, to adjust his harsh black locks hanging in profusion over his shoulders. Having performed a trip of full three quarters of an hour, the Omai came gallantly into harbour, all safe, passenger in good health.

"On landing, we found our fellow-travellers on the

shore. My young friend Augustus was vexed that he was not with us; but if he had, he would probably have been *de trop*, for I much doubt whether the South Sea Triton could have carried double. My father looked a little grave at my having been so venturous; the noble captain and the philosopher laughed heartily, and called me a tough little fellow; and Omai and I were, henceforth, constant companions.

"After lounging till late in the day at Scarborough, we resumed our travel; but the last four miles of the day's journey were somewhat perilous.

"From Whitby to Mulgrave there was, then, but one road; most of which was, in fact, no road at all. On leaving the town of Whitby, we descended a hill called the 'Up-Gang,' which was, and is, still almost perpendicular; of all Gangs, Banditti or others, to terrify a traveller, they cannot put a man in greater fear for his life than this Up-Gang; and, when you have, God willing, got to the bottom of the precipice without breaking your neck, you are to pass over about three miles of no very wide way, full of quicksands; bounded by the Ocean on one side, and impervious cliffs on the other; you must make haste, too, if the sea be coming in, otherwise you will be caught by the tide, and, then, '*bon soir!*'

"When we got upon the sands, the wind had risen, the sea roared, and it was almost dark; the horses took fright, dragged the carriage into the surf, and the evening marine trip threatened to be much less propitious than my morning's excursion, upon the back of Omai. The unusual situation in which we were placed must, I think, have puzzled the brave

sea-captain, and the navigating philosopher; for, however they might have been ice-locked, or tempest-tost, they had never, hitherto, begun a voyage in a post-coach and four.

"With some difficulty, the post-boys, the best and only commanders on such an expedition, forced the horses inland, dodged the quicksands upon shore, as well as they could, in the dusk, and set us down safe at Mulgrave.

"This residence belonged, at the time of my first visit to it, to the Lord Mulgrave, whose eldest son was the Honourable Constantine Phipps, with whom we were then travelling, and who inherited his father's title and estate; and on his demise, he was succeeded by his brother Henry, the present Earl. The family abode was, then, a common modern habitation, upon much too small a scale, more like a dwelling-house upon the limited acres of a private gentleman, than a mansion which harmonises with a lordly domain. The best apartments were in front, and looked upon nothing that I remember but a bowling-green, that dull vegetable gaming-table, on which nobody plays when it rains; the back rooms, which seemed to be little, or not at all frequented by the family, commanded, by a strange perversion in taste, a fine view of the German Ocean. The stone stables were handsome enough in themselves, but they elbowed the front of the house, staring on the one side of it; and between these and the woods beyond them, something, I forget what, interposed; so that the woods, in which the old Castle had been built, irrigated by romantic streams and cascades, and, as Brown expressed it,

full of capabilities, were shut out; the chaotic beauties of this neglected wilderness lay like diamonds in a mine, valuable and invisible.

"On the morning after our arrival, we went to visit the Alum Works on the Mulgrave estate, which I believe are very valuable. The first process of obtaining, and the second of crystallising the material, are both interesting: but the inspection of them is more curious than pleasant, as is generally the case in delving, and manufacturing. The rocks, dug into quarries, from which the alum is taken, are of a very formidable height, and as upright as a wall; but, if the labourers employed upon them were a parcel of goats, they could not have a greater contempt for a precipice. These fellows stand upon little narrow ridges, they are in the same perilous situation, except that they do not swing in the air, with 'one who gathers samphire—dreadful trade!' The depth into which an accident, at every moment likely to happen, might plunge them, and the tranquillity and phlegm with which they seem to consider such an event, if they consider at all, brings to mind the incredible tale, à la Munchausen, of the Scotchman's tumble from one of the loftiest houses in the Old Town of Edinburgh. He slipped, says the legend, off the roof of a habitation sixteen stories high;* and, when midway in his descent

* To account for the extreme elevation of the above-mentioned dwellings, there is a deep ravine between the old and new towns of Edinburgh, which are connected by a bridge over the chasm. Some houses, therefore, in the principal street of the ancient Edinburgh, erected on the edge of this hollow, are considerably higher on one side than on the other. A few similar instances of building may be seen in the raised road leading to St. George's Fields, from the southern toll-gate of Waterloo Bridge.

through the air, he arrived at a lodger looking out at a window of the eighth floor, to whom, as he was an acquaintance, he observed, *en passant*, ' eh, Sandy, man, sic a fa' as I shall hae.'

" In regard to the nature of our daily occupations, they were guided by the two principals of our party ; and as active inquiry was their ruling passion, the spirit of research predominated over all our amusements. Botany, and opening the ancient *tumuli*, of which there were several in the neighbourhood, were our chief objects. Sir Joseph Banks, who had a better claim, I imagine, than Dioscorides to the title of " the Prince of Botanists," put the two boys, Augustus Phipps and myself, into active training for the first of these pursuits, by sending us into the woods, early every morning, to gather plants. We could not easily have met with an abler master; and, although it was somewhat early for us to turn natural philosophers, the novelty of the thing, and rambling through wild sylvan tracts of peculiarly romantic beauty, counteracted all notions of studious drudgery, and turned science into a sport. We were prepared over-night for these morning excursions by Sir Joseph, who could speak, like Solomon, ' of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall.' He explained to us the rudiments of the Linnæan system, in a series of nightly lectures, which were very short, clear, and familiar ; the first of which, he illustrated by cutting up a cauliflower, whereby he entertained the adults, Omai excepted, as much as he delighted the younkers ; and it was whimsical to observe the intrepid adventurer, who

had been lately attempting to force his way through the globe's arctic extremity, eagerly employed in penetrating a few feet below the surface of a field in Yorkshire. But he doated upon a discovery, great or small, as Hotspur did upon honour; and, when he could not pluck it from the sea, why, *pour passer le temps*, he tried a *tumulus;* and in this he succeeded. It is easier to find an old passage to the dead, than a new one for the living.

"As to the products of the *Tumuli*, which were to reward our toils, they consisted of a few crumbling pots, dignified by the name of urns, of less intrinsic value, than a Staffordshire pipkin: and some small pieces of copper money, with which it was impossible to toss up, for they boasted neither heads nor tails; whatever had been stamped upon them was either quite obliterated, or inexplicable. Two or three of them came into my possession, from my being one of the researching party, but I did not keep them long; and, from that time to this, I have evinced no talents as a hoarder of coin. My attempts, indeed, in this way, have been generally made with a view to modern English specimens, stamped with King's heads of the Brunswick line; many of these have, at different times, been in my hands; but, somehow or other, they have soon passed out of them again, and I have never been able to succeed as a collector.

"On the occasions of breaking up the barrows,*

* Plott notices two sorts of barrows in Oxfordshire; one placed on the military ways, the other in the fields, meadows, and woods. The former were doubtless of Roman, the latter more probably by the Britons or Danes.—"Some of these barrows appear made and erected only of earth, others are more

we went to work upon our sepulchral undertakings as cheerfully as undertakers in general; although upon reversed principles, for we un-did 'funerals performed;' and if the era be considered in which the men whose ashes we disturbed had probably flourished, we were busied in heathen deterration, instead of Christian burial. But it was a kind of field-day whenever we opened a tumulus; a grand muster of all our party, attended by helpers, each carrying 'a pick-axe and a spade,' and as the operation, which occupied several hours, was effected at some distance from the house, we pitched a tent upon the scene of action, under which we dined.

"Dinner is a very important affair, and the daily necessities of hunger demand a mutton-chop, rather than the potted remains of an old Roman. Foresight, therefore, prompted us to carry out provisions; but as we were all of old Rapid's opinion that, 'if it is ever so little, let me have it hot,' the eatables were to be dressed on the ground; and having no Doctor Kitchener, or Monsieur Ude, of our party, the last of whom I take to be the best kitchener of the two, we were obliged to cook for ourselves, after our own receipt. Sir Joseph made very palatable stews, in a tin machine, which he called by a hard name, and which is now very common. One day, among other dainties, we had a barbicued hog, a huge whole monster, which I thought very nasty; but this might be partly fancy, for I took a prejudice against him, while he was roasting: he was put

regular, trenched round, some with two or three circumvallations, and surmounted with monumental stones." The barrows near Mulgrave were of the inferior description; being only small hillocks, artifically raised.

down to a blazing fire in the field, where he was burned, scorched, and blackened, till he looked like a fat protestant at the stake, in the days of Bishop Bonner: we all had a flap at him, with a rag dipped in vinegar, at the end of a stick, by way of a basting ladle, otherwise he would have been done to a cinder: but at these anti-grave-digging jollifications, the talents of Omai shone most conspicuously; and, in the culinary preparations, he beat all his competitors. He practised the Otaheitan *cuisine*, which I cannot better describe than by quoting a work* now before me.

"First, the fire is kindled by rubbing one piece of dry wood upon the side of another; then, digging a pit about half a foot deep, and two or three yards in circumference, they pave the bottom with large pebble stones, which they lay down very smooth and even, and then kindle in it a fire with dry wood, leaves, and the husks of cocoa-nuts. They take out the embers when the stones are sufficiently heated, and, after raking up the ashes on every side, cover the stones with a layer of cocoa-nut leaves, and wrap up the animal that is to be dressed with the leaves of the plantain. Having placed it in the pit, and covered it with hot embers, they lay upon it bread-fruit and yams, which are also wrapped in the leaves of the plantain. Over these they frequently spread the remainder of the embers, mixing among them some of the hot stones with more cocoa-nuts, husks and leaves among them, and then close all up with earth, so that

* Cooke's System of Universal Geography.

the heat is kept in. The oven is kept thus closed a longer or shorter time, according to the size of the meat that is dressing.

" Hence it appears that the cooks of the Society Islands are, in fact, bakers, whose ovens are underground, with mouths at the top. Omai, in dressing a couple of fine fowls, observed the above process, but, as may be supposed, with some exceptions: he did not obtain his fire by friction, having much greater facilities of kindling a flame; he cooked fowls instead of dogs,* which last he would have preferred, in his own country, as the greater delicacy. For part of his combustibles, and the layers to cover the stones, he had other materials than the husks and leaves of the cocoa; for plantain leaves, to wrap up the animal food, he was supplied with writing paper, smeared with butter; for yams, he had potatoes; for the bread fruit, bread itself, the best home-made in Yorkshire. My readers will think, at least I do, that some of these substitutions, particularly a couple of hens, for a couple of hounds, were altogether absolute improvements. The homely adage explains the ' proof of the pudding,' and as to Omai's dish, in the eating, nothing could be better dressed, or more savoury: the smouldering pebble-stones and embers of the Otaheitan oven had given a certain flavour to the fowls, a *soupçon* of smokiness, which made them taste as if a ham

* Dogs, fed entirely upon vegetables, are the most favourite fare of the Otaheitans. The naval gourmands, from England, who tasted the flesh of these animals, pronounced it be nearly equal to lamb.

accompanied them. This saving, by the by, in procuring the relish of a ham, without incurring the expense of the ham itself, argues greatly in favour of Omai's receipt, and is well worthy the consideration of all good house-wives: as to the potatoes all the paddies of the Emerald Isle must own themselves outdone in the cooking of praties. One day, we roasted a sea-gull, which was enough to turn the stomach of a cormorant, the experiment was a complete failure, the raw dinner of a Hottentot must be refuge from it.

"Our rural pursuits at Mulgrave, being influenced by the leaders of our Company as before stated, were of course, as may be supposed, widely different from the usual sports of country gentlemen; the commander of the North-Pole expedition, and the visitor of the South-Sea Islands, disdained to shoot at any bird or beast more common than a penguin or a bear. It was late in August, yet our licensed murders on the neighbouring moors were always perpetrated by a hired assassin; the sanguinary gamekeeper dispatched the feathered innocents for pay, and we saw no grouse till it was killed, roasted, and put upon the table.

"Omai, indeed, prowled about the precincts with a gun, a weapon of terror and destruction which had scared him half out of his wits, in his own country, when he first heard its explosion, and witnessed its effects, in the hands of Europeans; but he was now familiarized to the instrument; and if practice can lead to perfection, he promised to be an excellent marksman, for he popped at all the feathered

creation which came in his way, and which happened for the most part to be dunghill-cocks, barn-door geese, and ducks in the pond.

" His slaughter of domestic birds was by no means inconsiderable; he knew nothing of our distinctions between *meum* and *tuum*, nor of any of our laws whatever, and had it not been that he was naturally a tender-hearted barbarian, it is probable that, after having killed off a farmer's live-stock, he might have taken a shot at the farmer himself. Even when he had to deal with the *feræ naturæ*, in the regular way, his native wildness often betrayed him into most unsportsmanlike conduct.

" One day, while he carried his gun, I was out with him in a stubble field, at the beginning of September, when he pointed to some object at a distance, which I could not distinguish. His eye sparkled, he laid down his gun mighty mysteriously, and put his finger on my mouth to enjoin silence; he then stole onwards, crouching along the ground for several yards, till on a sudden he darted forward like a cat, and sprang upon a covey of partridges, one of which he caught and took home alive in great triumph.* I am not studied in Game Laws, but if they do not, either by some particular clause, or by a sweeping expression, prohibit catching partridges with the hands, poachers might, in

* This instinct has been lately corroborated from New Zealand, September 1, 1839.—(N.B. First day of shooting in the mother country.) Colonel Wakefield gives a curious account of a native who accompanied him on a shooting excursion, and answered every purpose of a setter dog.

time, become disciples of Omai, and evade the penalties of the statute, as far at least as the capture is concerned.

"I was present at another instance of *Orsonism* in my tattooed friend, when, with the intent to take a ride, he seized a grazing horse by the tail; the astounded animal galloped off, wincing and plunging, and dragging his tenacious assailant after him, till he slipped from his grasp, and left him in the mire: how Omai contrived to dodge the horse's heels, and escape with his brains in his head, I cannot explain. He was not always so intrepid; there was a huge bull in the grounds, which kept him at a respectful distance, and of which he always spoke reverentially as the man-cow.*

"During our stay in Yorkshire, Omai and I were reciprocally School-master and Scholar, through mutual instruction, in our different native languages. We began by pointing to objects, the names of which Omai pronounced in his own tongue, and I gave him their translations in mine; from words we easily advanced to phrases and short sentences, till, in the brief space of the first week, we could hold something like a conversation, jabbering to each other between Otaheitan and English.

* As the natives of Ulateiah had only three quadrupeds, the dog, the rat, and the hog, which possibly originated there from some wrecked vessel, Omai had at that time no term descriptive of a horse, but that of 'a great hog that carries people,' or a cow, that of 'a great hog that gives milk;' and as he had possibly hunted the hogs in a similar manner, Omai had become a proficient, and had no astounding fear of the 'great hog.' As regards the cow, he appears to have been subsequently better instructed.—Ed.

"This plan of taking a short cut to literature, in open defiance of all philological rules, is the grand object of the Hamiltonian system, which was thus forestalled by a savage, and a boy of thirteen, who were themselves anticipated by everybody who had then been born, gifted with the power of speech, since Adam; for do we not all originally learn to talk our vernacular tongue before we have ever seen or heard of a grammar; and since that tongue is as foreign to us, at first, as any other, of course we may acquire any other in the same way: it saves time, shortens mental labour, and practically gives us a great deal of grammatical knowledge, without the mechanical study, to which those who wish to be conspicuous pupils of Priscian may afterwards, and with more facility, resort.

"But, after all my Yorkshire progress in the attainment of knowledge, I may say with Lingo, '*quid opus?* what use of all my laarning?' I have already shown that my antiquarian pursuits were fruitless; and, as to botany, I remember no more of it, than of South-Sea verbality, of which I retain not one word, except that I have a faint notion of *Marama* being Otaheitan for the moon. I had rather, however, lose one language than have only a smattering of two. I once met with an English groom at Chantilly, where he had resided for some years, who had lost so much of his vulgar English, and could speak so little of his *patois* French, that he was almost unintelligible to John Bull, or to *Mounseer*.

"In proportion as his holidays are drawing to a

close, a school-boy is always breaking his heart, however soon he may cement it again, upon the breaking up of parties which have delighted him. It was, therefore, a tristful morning for me when we quitted Mulgrave; but, to mitigate my sorrows my father had invitations still further north; and our friends accompanied us about twenty miles on our way, to the places at which we made our first two halts.

"On the first day, for we made two days' journey of twenty and odd miles, we dined and slept at Skelton Castle. Hail to the merry memory of J. S. Hall, Esq.! the much too prurient author of Crazy Tales, Epistles to Grown Gentlewomen and Gentlemen, &c., whom Skelton Castle then acknowledged for its master, and who contrived to obtain for this residence the appellation of Crazy Castle, while he fixed upon himself the name of Crazy Hall.* His poems have found their way into most English modern libraries, their drollery, if not their wit, having procured them a place there; but in some corner which prudential morality prescribes, as most likely to escape the notice of those who would be shocked, or vitiated, by reading them. Certainly, they are ill calculated for the perusal of the Clergy, or other grave characters, or of young gentlemen under age, or of any female. I was too young to relish that peculiar vein of humour in the conversation of this eccentric person, which seemed

* The Frontispiece to the Tales is an engraving of Skelton Castle, represented as "Crazy Castle;" with an owl upon a tub, in the foreground of the print.

to entertain my elder fellow-travellers; to the best of my recollection, he was an odd thin figure, in a dark scratch wig, which was remarkable, as almost every body's hair was then dressed, and powdered *

"From Skelton Castle we went to Kirkleatham Hall, the family mansion of Sir Charles Turner; both these places are in the neighbourhood of Gisborough.

"The Sir Charles Turner of the time I am mentioning was a very worthy country-gentleman. He was in parliament, and was one of those 'large-acred men' whose voice Ministers consider to be as desirable in the Senate, as it is powerful in the field; he persecuted a fox with jovial inveteracy, and was the most formidable Nimrod in his district.

"He showed us a picture of a favourite white hunter, surmounted by himself, in the act of leaping a five barred gate; being the last of an uncommon number of similar jumps which this fine animal had accomplished, with Sir Charles upon his back, during one day's chase. When such paintings

* He was intimate with Sterne, who addresses him in several of his posthumously published letters under the title of "dear cousin," and "dear Antony;" and in one of these epistles, a strange one! written at a Coffee-house, in a kind of burlesque Latin, the author of Tristram Shandy says to him, *mi consobrine, consobrinis meis omnibus carior.* From this it appears, at first sight, that they were kinsmen; but Hall, in these letters, is called Antony, which was not his Christian name; the relationship, therefore, seems to have been a literary one, arising from "A Lyric Epistle to my Cousin Shandy," by Hall, and which is signed "your affectionate cousin, Antony Shandy." They were congenial spirits, for Sterne was as singular, and sometimes almost as licentious, in his prose, as Hall in his poetry.

formerly met my view, they excited in me an admiration for the rider which I have, long ago, exclusively transferred to the horse.

" The above-mentioned baronet had many amiable qualities; his successor and son, the last Sir Charles, not many years deceased, was a child, on my juvenile visit to Kirkleatham; he was educating according to his father's principles of making him a fine dashing fellow, but under excellent control. When I first saw him, he ran into a drawing-room, full of company, with a live mouse in his hand: 'Bite off his head, Charles,' said the father; the subordinate boy obeyed the word of command, his white dental guillotine fell upon the condemned vermin, and poor mousey was instantly executed.

" In the adjacent village of Kirkleatham, there was, at this time, an individual residing in a neat comfortable cottage, who excited much interest in the visitors at the hall. His looks were venerable from his great age, and his deportment was above that which is usually found among the lowly inhabitants of a hamlet. How he had acquired this air of superiority over his neighbours it is difficult to say, for his origin must have been humble. His eightieth summer had nearly passed away, and, only two or three years previously, he had learned to read, that he might gratify a parent's pride and love, by perusing his son's first voyage round the world! He was the Father of Captain Cook! This anecdote was told to us on the spot, and I vouch no further for its authenticity: but, if it be true, there

are few touches of human nature more simply affecting.

"After three or four days' stay at Kirkleatham, we took leave of Sir Charles Turner; and bade adieu, till our next meeting in London, to our interesting friends, the gallant Constantine, the young Augustus, and the philosophical Sir Joseph, not forgetting, et tu, brute! Omai.

"Still we went northward, first to Stockton-upon-Tees, a cheerful town; then to Durham, the capital of the bishopric, a strange up-and-down episcopal city; and, if you include the straggling suburbs, partly picturesque, partly mean and ugly; and, about four miles further, to Cocken Hall, a famed seat of romantic beauty, then belonging to Mr. Carr. To this place my father had been invited; and we reached it safely, notwithstanding the ford which you had then to pass, before you could arrive at the mansion. I need not describe the nature of a ford, every body knows that, if you deviate from it, you slip into deeper water, which is an extremely wet event, any how, but particularly perilous in a post-chaise. The post-boys, however, assured us that there was not the least danger, because, which we thought a very odd reason, a horse, a cart, and a butcher, the butcher sitting in the said cart, and driving the said horse, had all been swept away by the flood, two days ago: they argued therefore, that we had nothing to apprehend, as such an accident was never known to happen oftener than once or twice a year. This logic we did not

think quite convincing, for we were then just midway in the passage, and the horses up to their girths in a rapid river.

" We found nobody at Cocken, but Mr. Carr, his wife, Lady Mary Carr, and his devoted companion, Peter, an army Captain on half-pay, whose surname it seemeth not meet that I should register; suffice it to say, that, being a man of little substance, he deemed it politic, seeing his own pecuniary deficiencies, to seek out a man of better substance than himself, and to become his shadow; accordingly Squire Carr and Captain Peter were inseparables; upon the usual terms of agreement, which are tacitly understood between two such worthies; ostentation on one side, and adulation on the other.

" Such a family party was somewhat discouraging to my father, who had pledged himself to a week's stay; the only consolation to be expected, was from her Ladyship, a most amiable and perfectly well bred woman.* The Squire was a deep-drinker, my father a very shallow one; I did not drink at all; Captain Peter, of course, drank as a shadow should do, that is, glass after glass, and quart after quart, more or less, after the example, or rather ordonnance, of his substance. The substance had two modes of addressing the shadow, upon these occasions: first, by interrogation; secondly, by assertion: as thus, 'Have not we had enough to-night, Peter; what say you?'—In this case, Peter answered and said, 'A drop more, Mr. Carr, would be the death of me;'

* Lady Mary Carr was sister to the late Earl of Darlington, father of the present Marquess of Cleveland.

but, when, on the contrary, it was, ' We must have another bottle,' Peter was sure to observe, getting up, at the same time, to ring the bell, ' it will do us a deal of good, Mr. Carr.'* I remarked, however, that in the course of seven evenings, there was only one on which the Patron put the interrogative to Peter: on all the other six, he peremptorily declared for another bottle, another, and another.

" As to the conversation, if conversation it could be called, it was chiefly usurped by the squire, and consisted of the narrative of his own youthful exploits, and of his travels abroad; showing how he managed a horse, unmanageable by anybody else, in the Great Square of a foreign town; how the Great Square was crowded with spectators; how the horse reared, and how the ladies, living in the Great Square, waved their handkerchiefs at him out of the window; and many a tale of the same sort, at which my father yawned, and the patient Peter expressed his admiration, as much as if he had not heard them a hundred times.

" Now ' this was worshipful society!' which did, in no small degrees of drinking and dulness, distress and bore my temperate and literary sire. I was happily sent away, in decent time, to bed, but my poor pitiable parent had no escape from the dinner-table to the drawing-room; for her Ladyship, calmly

* These were Gnatho's principles of toad-eating his patrons: ' Quidquid dicunt laudo; id rursum si negant, laudo id quoque. Negat quis? nego; ait? aio: postremo imperavi egomet mihi Omnia assentari; is quæstus nunc est multo uberrimus.'— TERENCE.

submitting to the habits of the Squire, his protracted potations, and his embargo upon his guests, retired very early to her chamber; where she must, I presume, have experienced much the same *désagrémens* as those of Mrs. Sullen, in Farquhar's Comedy of the Beaux' Stratagem.*

"Our morning's exercise was my father's great compensation for his sedentary infliction of the evening, The Squire, as might be expected, was no early riser; the shadow could not be looked for without the substance; therefore, while the Patron and Peter dozed beyond noon, we were enjoying beautiful rides and drives in the grounds of Cocken Hall, and in the excursions to their vicinities.

"The coal-waggon roads, in the neighbourhood, were then reckoned curious, although they are no longer so; being nothing more than railways, common now throughout England. These roads present a busy scene of commerce near Newcastle, and are thronged with carts going thither, laden from the collieries. I was much amused by seeing, when they arrived at a descent, the horse which drew them taken from the front, and placed in the rear, to keep them back, in order to check the

* Mrs. Sullen, in talking of her husband, says, 'he comes flounce into bed, dead as a salmon into a fishmonger's basket; his feet cold as ice, his breath hot as a furnace, and his hands and his face as greasy as his flannel nightcap. Oh! matrimony—matrimony! He tosses up the clothes with a barbarous swing over his shoulders, disorders the whole economy of my bed, leaves me half naked, and my whole night's comfort is the tuneful serenade of that wakeful nightingale, his nose.'

impetus of the machine's progress, which would otherwise be too great, in going down hill.

" This seemingly Irish operation, and the traffic going on, are a practical refutation of the two sayings, which express a reversal in the right order of things ; for here the honest folks literally prove that it is very good sense to ' put the cart before the horse,' and to ' carry coals to Newcastle.'

" In our airings, we often passed Lumley Castle; so we did pass Lumley Castle, which is all I have to say about it.

" Cocken Hall, four miles from the city of Durham, is so decidedly a Lion for travellers in those northern latitudes of England, that a description of its attractions would be like repeating the *bon mots* of the excellent Mr. Joseph Miller.* I say nothing therefore of its ' dingles and bushy dells,' its wooded paths under precipices bedecked with vines, by the side of the pellucid river Wear, and its view of Finchal Abbey in ruins.

" Having touched the northern extremity of our tour, the first place at which we stopped to dine and sleep on our return southward, was Raby Castle, the seat of the Darlington family. This noble pile of building rears its lofty head, in all the

* The far-famed Joe Miller, to whom many comic writers have been particularly indebted, was a singularly dull person ; the jests which pass under his name, are the compilation of John Mottley, the dramatist, author of " The Life of the Czar Peter," and " The Lives of Dramatic Writers," annexed to " Whincop's Scanderbeg." The witticisms, many of them from Rabelais, have outlived the fame of their supposed originator, Mottley, who died October 30, 1750.

baronial pride of feudal times, of turrets, terraces, and battlements; it stands on those confines of Durham which adjoin to Yorkshire, and commands extensive views over the two counties.

"The late Earl of Darlington, then Lord of the Castle, was an old acquaintance of my father; and when first we came beneath his roof, it presented to us a warmer picture of ancient hospitality than I had ever witnessed, or may, perhaps, ever see again.

"We were benighted on our road thither, our day's journey had been all along unpropitious, it rained heavily and incessantly, and we had met with delays, and petty accidents and vexations at every turn. In the last seven miles after sunset, a fog arose; one of the horses cast a shoe, and his rider dismounted to grope for it in the mud, and in the dark; my father let down the glass to ask what was the matter, in phrase too classical for a north-country post-boy to understand; and the post-boy answered in a dialect quite incomprehensible to the translator of Terence. I could not act as interpreter between them, for I knew nothing of the north-country language, having neglected it altogether, while I was studying the Otaheitan. All this time, the rain was pelting in upon us at the chaise window: we were chilly, hungry, impatient, comfortless. Ye who have travelled where tigers prowl, who have fled from an avalanche, or have been plundered by wandering Arabs on your way, look not with derision on the the minor 'Miseries of Human Life.' Hold not in contempt, because ye have rambled in the sublimities

of disastrous peregrinations, the casual discomforts of a turnpike road, where everything is expected to go upon velvet; pity the Englishmen on a dark rainy night, sitting dinnerless in a post-chaise, and waiting the issue of a hunt after a horse-shoe.

"As we passed through the outward gateway of the Castle the vapour was dense upon the moat, and we were enveloped in night-fog, while the rolling of the carriage-wheels, and the trampling of the horses' hoofs, sounded dolefully over the drawbridge; we might have fancied ourselves victims to the darkest times of Gallic despotism, condemned, by a *lettre de cachet*, to linger out our lives in the deepest dungeons of the Bastille; but lo! on the opening of a massive door, a gleam of light flashed upon us; crack went the whips, we dashed forward at full trot, and in a moment drew up, not to a piazza, nor a vestibule, nor a flight of steps in a cold court-yard, but before a huge blazing fire, in a spacious hall. The magical effect of this sudden transition from destitution to luxury, has never occurred to me any where else, except in the two last scenes of every Pantomime, when the Guardian Genius with a wand, waves and recuscitates Harlequin and Columbine out of a Coal-pit into the Temple of the Goddess of Gas—

"Hence grief and darkness, enter love and joy!"

"If there were space enough in all the town houses of our *noblesse* to admit of carriages setting down and taking up the company, before a fire in the hall, what an improvement would it be, even in

this improved and still improving age! How would colds, catarrhs, and rheumatisms be prevented or assuaged! How many more old butterflies of balls and routs would continue to flutter through a hard winter! but it would half ruin the Doctors and Apothecaries.

"From Raby Castle, we did not plod our way to London upon the principles of sameness adopted by that King of France who, with twenty thousand men,

'Marched up the hill, and then marched down again;'

for, in many instances, we varied both from the regular route, and the devious track we had already gone over.

"As to general points, in addition to some already mentioned, the three objects of public interest which most attracted my notice, during our expedition, either outward or homeward bound, were the Docks at Liverpool, the Manufactory at Soho, near Birmingham, and the Duke of Bridgewater's Canal-works at Worsley Mills, seven miles from Manchester; these last were visited as great curiosities, before the passion for canals had cut through almost every county in our island; and, if I wondered at the tunnel for a subterraneous navigation leading to the coal mines, I was still more astounded at seeing laden coal-barges gliding along, in a kind of water-trough, over the masts of vessels sailing in the river Irwell.

"I thought little, as it will easily be supposed, about travelling expenses; I cannot, therefore, with

any accuracy, tell at how much less cost a man might 'take his ease in his Inn,' in those days, than in the present; my father, however, frequently observed upon the gradual lowering of charges, in proportion to the distance from London: the articles enumerated in a bill for dinner, which were then cheap, not only grew cheaper as we went on, but when we reached the northern counties, were not enumerated at all; and, instead of swelling the account with 'a roast fowl, sauce for ditto, potatoes, melted butter for ditto, to poached eggs, to cheese, to toasted ditto, &c.,' the items were all consolidated under the head of 'EATING;' against which was regularly placed the sum of, guess how much?—One Shilling—and this for no scanty meal, but plenty of everything; fish, flesh, and fowl, and excellent of their kind! contradicting, at every stage of our journey, the saying of 'go further and fare worse.'

"The common rate of posting was one shilling a mile, for a chaise and pair; and I often remarked, on the Surrey side of Westminster Bridge, a board at a hackney-man's stable-yard, on which was inscribed, in large letters, 'Posting at Ninepence per mile.'

CHAPTER XII.

1775—76.

Return to Westminster School—Garrick again—Reverend Mr. Foster—Foote—Weston—Proposed sale of Garrick's share of Drury Lane Theatre—Doctor Johnson described—Contrasted with Gibbon — Epicœne — Mrs. Siddons — Bensley — The Spleen, or Islington Spa—Pecuniary misunderstanding between Colman and Garrick—Garrick's retirement from the stage, and farewell—Colman the younger's reminiscences of Garrick—Trial of the Duchess of Kingston—Foote's retirement—Negotiation for the Haymarket Theatre — Colman becomes the proprietor.

"LATE in September," continues George Colman, "after a huge encroachment upon the term of my holidays, my father happily, arrived in Soho Square; whence I proceeded next morning, by no means so happily, to Dean's Yard, to commence the horrors of τύπτω in the fourth form of Westminster School."*

During his stay with Captain Phipps in the North, Colman the elder received the following letter from Garrick :—

"Hampton, August 29, 1775.

"MY DEAR COLMAN,

"I expect to see you as brown and as hearty as a Devonshire plough-boy, who faces the sun without shelter, and knows not the luxury of small beer and porter. Will nothing satisfy your ambition, but Robinson Crusoe? I think *little Friday* would do very well for you to begin with, particularly as you are in company with those mighty

* In the fourth form (to which I was soon to be removed)the boys are first taught the rudiments of Greek.

adventurous knights, Banks and Phipps! If you are still happy in risking your neck with them, I beg my best compliments to them.

"What say you if I should once more emerge from stone and gravel, and many other human infirmities and curses, and spring out again, an active being, and exercise with the best of you? Since you left me, I have been upon the rack, and almost despaired of fighting a battle, or committing a murder again; but a fortnight ago, my good genius led me to the Duke of Newcastle's, where I met with an old Neapolitan friend, and he commended a remedy, which has worked wonders. It has taken away half the evil of my life, and at this moment—but Lord help us! We little men make nothing of swelling ourselves to a Hercules, or a Robinson Crusoe! To be serious, you will be pleased to see me, as I am, my spirits are returned, *et redeant saturnia regna.*

"By the bye, I had some thoughts to make a farce upon the follies and fashions of the times, and your friend Omiah was to be my *Arlequin Sauvage;* a fine character to give our fine folks a genteel dressing. I must lick my fingers with you, at the Otaheite fowl and potatoes; but don't you spoil the dish, and substitute a fowl for a young puppy? Pray my love to George, they who don't like him, are not fit company for you or me, so no thanks to them for their good reception.

"Notwithstanding, Foster's oath,* Foote has thrown the

* The Rev. Mr. Foster, a clergyman of high respectability, swore, that Foote had agreed to suppress the Trip to Calais on condition of receiving two thousand pounds from the Duchess of Kingston. Dr. John Hoadley, in a letter to Garrick, dated August 27, ludicrously asks, "How could the Duchess be so overseen, as they say, as to enter the dirty sheets of a newspaper, with such a fellow's wooden leg? she was resolved to have a new kick, and he has given it to her, to the purpose." Foote's letter to the Marquis of Hertford, Lord Chamberlain, relative to his mandate forbidding the performance of the Trip to Calais, is certainly an admirable lecture.

Duchesss upon her back, and there has left her, as you or I would do. She is sick, and has given up the cause, and has made herself very ridiculous, and hurt herself much in the struggle. Foote's letter is one of his best things, in his best manner.

" Pray come away, and see my sword drawn: the theatre is noble! *Entre nous*, Pope has squeaked, and sent her penitentials, but I cannot receive them.*

Ever your's,

D. Garrick."

" My wife sends her best love to George, I have scribbled away such stuff! but we rise! We! we apples! ha! ha! ha!"

Colman had half determined to accompany Capt. Phipps in a voyage to the North Pole, whence Garrick's allusion in the preceding letter, to the possibility of his being cast away like another Robinson Crusoe. Little Friday was a banter on Colman's smallness of stature.

At this period Lord Mulgrave was at Spa, where he died, September 13, 1775. Captain Phipps succeeded him, as Constantine, second Baron Mulgrave in Ireland.†

Drury Lane Theatre underwent great alterations, and was gorgeously decorated previous to the season 1775–6.

The next letter is from Garrick.

" My Dear Colman, December 12, 1775.

" Pray read over the inclosed; if you have an hour's leisure, you shall know its history. I must write to-night

* Miss Pope, the actress.

† He was created Baron Mulgrave of Mulgrave in Yorkshire, June 16, 1790, and died in 1792, when the title to the English barony became extinct.

about it, which letter you shall see, if I can see you in the evening. Shall I call upon you at any time? I cannot get rid of an engagement I have, till about nine. Where may you be till about eight? I want to talk to you about 'the Silent Woman.' Poor Weston, Moody tells me, will, he thinks, never play again; he wants to go to Bath: therefore, as we cannot stay his recovery, to whom shall I give La Fool? We must go to work upon it directly. Do not read these four acts, though but short, if it is in the least inconvenient. My love to Miss Ford,* and compliments to Miss Mills. You were not at Covent Garden. I like the Duenna much, with some few objections. It will do their business.

Your's ever, D. GARRICK."

The enclosure alluded to appears to have been the manuscript of Jephson's play of Vitellia, which Garrick rejected as not at all calculated for success upon the stage; alleging that it was romantic, and, what was worse, unaffecting.

La Fool was a character in the Silent Woman. Sheridan's Duenna was first performed at Covent Garden Theatre, November 21, 1775, and was more successful than any recent production.

Poor Weston did never play again. He performed for the last time, on the *début* of Miss Ambrose, in May Day; or, the Little Gipsy, October 28, 1775, and died on January 31, following. Foote so highly valued him, that he had his portrait painted; and about an hour before quitting his house in Suffolk Street, on his last journey to Dover, where death arrested his progress, he went into every

* Miss Ford was the daughter of the mother of George Colman the younger, previous to her connection with Colman. She appears to have been maintained by him, after the death of her mother.

room, and in a way wholly unusual with him, scrupulously examined his furniture and his paintings. When he came to that of Weston, he made a full stop, and, as if by some sudden impulse, without uttering a syllable, firmly fixed his eyes on the countenance of his old acquaintance, and then, after some moments, turning away, he exclaimed, with tears, which he could not suppress, 'Poor Weston!' The words, however, had scarcely parted from his lips, when, as if in reproach at his own seeming security, he repeated "Poor Weston! it will be very shortly poor Foote, or the intelligence of my spirits deceives me."

At this period, it appears, that Garrick sent their mutual friend, Becket, to Colman, to sound him, as to whether the latter would become his successor, and purchase Garrick's share in Drury Lane Theatre. Becket was instructed to say, that an offer of 35,000*l.* had been made for it: Garrick required Colman's speedy determination, and profound secrecy.

To this communication Colman thus replied:

"The last time we talked over your proposed sale, I told you, that whenever you were absolutely fixed, and would acquaint me with the particulars, of which I am still totally ignorant, I would give you as speedy an answer as you, yourself, would think reasonable, or, indeed, possible, in a matter of so much importance. If, however, your letter of Thursday means to offer me the refusal of only your share of the property, to that offer, I can immediately, and most determinately, say, NO. I would not for worlds again sit on the throne of Brent-

ford* with any assessor, except it were yourself; and you may remember, I told you so at the time above mentioned, assigning that you were the only man in the kingdom I would suffer to govern me, and I did not know a man in the kingdom, who would suffer me to govern him: therefore, I can have no other partner. If you are enabled to treat for the whole, or to reserve your own half, we must talk further, &c."†

Colman in fact absolutely declined entering into a new partnership, having experienced so much mortification.

We must now again resume the early recollections of George Colman the younger, and hear him relate his first introduction, by his father, to the then much to be dreaded Dr. Johnson.

"My boyish mind had anticipated an awful impression when I was first unwillingly brought into the presence of the stupendous Johnson. I knew not then, that he had 'a love for little children,' calling them 'pretty dears, and giving them sweet-meats,' as Boswell hath since, in the simplicity of his heart, narrated. It was my hapless lot, however, to be excluded from the objects of this propension; perhaps at my age of about fourteen, I might have been too old, or too ugly; but the idea of Johnson's carrying *bon-bons*, to give to children of any age, is much like supposing that a Greenland bear has a pocket stuffed with tartlets for travellers.

* *Vide* Whitehead's occasional prologue, on the opening of Covent Garden Theatre, at the commencement of Colman's management.

† See the Garrick Correspondence.

" On the day of my introduction, he was asked to dinner at my father's house in Soho-square, and the erudite savage came a full hour before his time. I happened to be with my father, who was beginning his toilette, when it was announced to him that the Doctor had arrived. My sire, being one of the tributary princes who did homage to this monarch, was somewhat flurried; and, having dressed himself hastily, took me with him into the drawing-room.

" On our entrance, we found Johnson sitting in a *fauteuil* of rose-coloured satin, the arms and legs of which, of the chair, remember, not of the Doctor, were of burnished gold; and the contrast of the man with the seat was very striking; an unwashed coal-heaver in a *vis-à-vis* could not be much more misplaced than Johnson thus deposited. He was dressed in a rusty suit of brown cloth *dittos*, with black worsted stockings. His old yellow wig was of formidable dimensions; and the learned head which sustained it rolled about in a seemingly paralytic motion; but, in the performance of its orbit, it inclined chiefly to one shoulder, whether to the right or left, I cannot now remember; a fault never to be forgiven by certain of the *Twaddleri*, who think these matters of the utmost importance.

" He deigned not to rise on our entrance, and we stood before him, while he and my father talked. There was soon a pause in the colloquy, and my father making his advantage of it, took me by the hand, and said, 'Doctor Johnson, this is a little Colman.' The Doctor bestowed a slight ungracious glance upon me, and, continuing the rotary motion of his head, renewed the previous conversation.

Again there was a pause, again the anxious father, who had failed in his first effort, seized the opportunity for pushing a recognition of his progeny, with, 'This is my son, Doctor Johnson.' The great man's contempt for me was now roused to wrath; and, knitting his brows, he exclaimed in a voice of thunder, 'I *see* him, Sir!' He then fell back in his rose-coloured satin *fauteuil*, as if giving himself up to meditation; implying that he would not be further plagued, either with an old fool, or a young one.

"The gigantic Johnson could not be easily thrown out at window, particularly by my under-sized sire, but he deserved to be 'quoited down stairs, like a shove-groat shilling;' not exactly, perhaps, for his brutality to the boy, but for such an unprovoked insult to the father, of whose hospitality he was partaking. This, however, is only one among the numerous traits of grossness, already promulgated, in which the Bolt Court Philosopher completely falsified the principles of the Roman Poet:—

> ——— "ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes,
> Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros."

"After this rude rebuff from the Doctor, I had the additional felicity to be placed next to him at dinner; he was silent over his meal, but I observed that he was, as Shylock says of Launcelot Gobbo, a 'huge feeder;' and during the display of his voracity, which was worthy of Bolt Court, the perspiration fell in copious drops from his visage upon the table cloth; the clumsiness of the bulky animal, his strange costume, his uncouth gestures, yet the dominion which he usurped withal, rendered his presence a phenomenon among gentlemen; it was

the incursion of a new species of barbarian, a learned Attila, King of the Huns, come to subjugate polished society.

"The learned Gibbon was a curious counterbalance to the learned, may I not say *less* learned? Johnson. Their manners and taste, both in writing and conversation, were as different as their habiliments. On the day I first sat down with Johnson, in his rusty brown, and his black worsteds, Gibbon was placed opposite to me in a suit of flowered velvet, with a bag and sword.* Each had his measured phraseology; and Johnson's famous parallel, between Dryden and Pope, might be loosely parodied, in reference to himself and Gibbon. Johnson's style was grand, and Gibbon's elegant; the stateliness of the former was sometimes pedantic, and the polish of the latter was occasionally finical. Johnson marched to kettle-drums and trumpets: Gibbon moved to flutes and haut-boys: Johnson hewed passages through the Alps, while Gibbon levelled walks through parks and gardens. Mauled as I had been by Johnson, Gibbon poured balm upon my bruises, by condescending, once or twice, in the course of the evening, to talk with me; the great historian was light and playful, suiting his

* Gibbon's costume was not extraordinary at this time, a little overcharged, perhaps, if his person be considered, when almost every gentleman came to dinner in full dress. Foote's clothes were, then, tawdrily splashed with gold lace; which, with his linen, were generally bedawbed with snuff; he was a Beau Nasty. They tell of him, that, in his young days, and in the fluctuation of his finances, he walked about in boots, to conceal his want of stockings, and that, on receiving a supply of money, he expended it all upon a diamond ring, instead of purchasing the necessary articles of hosiery.

manner to the capacity of the boy; but it was done *more suâ*, still his mannerism prevailed; still he tapped his snuff-box; still he smirked, and smiled, and rounded his periods with the same air of good-breeding, as if he were conversing with men. His mouth, mellifluous as Plato's, was a round hole, nearly in the centre of his visage."

Colman had at this time altered Ben Jonson's comedy called 'Epicœne; or, the Silent Woman,' as a play-bill of the first night of its revival at Drury Lane Theatre, is before us. It is here inserted to show the style of such an affair at the period, Jan. 13, 1776.

DRURY LANE.

ACTED BUT ONCE THESE TWENTY YEARS.

By His Majesty's Company.

At the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane.

This Day, 13th Jan. 1776, will be revived a Comedy called

EPICŒNE; Or, the Silent Woman.

(From Ben Jonson.)

The Principal Characters by Mr. King, Mr. Bensley, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Brereton, Mr. Baddeley, Mr. Davies, Mr. Yates, Mrs. Hoskins, Miss Sherry, Mrs. Davies, Miss Platt, Mrs. Millidge,

And Mrs. Siddons.

With a new Occasional Prologue by Mr. Palmer.

The Characters new dressed in the habits of the times.

To which will be added,

A Dramatic Entertainment in two parts, of Singing, Dancing, and Dialogue, in Honour of Shakespeare, called

THE JUBILEE.

With an Overture, in which will be introduced A PAGEANT.

Books of the Songs and Chorusses to be had at the Theatre.

Boxes 5*s*. Pit 3*s*. First Gallery 2*s*. Upper Gallery 1*s*.

Places for the Boxes to be taken of Mr. Fosbrook, at the Stage Door.

No money will be received at the Stage-door, nor any money returned after the curtain is drawn up.

The doors will be opened at Five.—To begin exactly at Six.

Vivant Rex et Regina.

In this bill it would appear that Mrs. Siddons held a first-rate rank even at the period of 1776. Bensley acted Morose, and was reputed to have been very effective in the character. The following lively description of this respectable actor, is given by George Colman the younger.

"Bensley was an old friend of my father, and afterwards of myself. He commenced his course of worldly action in the service of his king and country, at the taking of the Havannah, but soon relinquished the amphibious achievements of a lieutenant in the marines, for the far less glorious enterprises of a theatrical adventurer. His first essay upon the stage, in 1765, was at Drury Lane, as Pierre, in Venice Preserved: he was drilled in this character by my father, to whose house at Richmond * he was invited, both as a friend and a pupil, during the process. There were then, upon a small mount in Richmond Park, the well known 'Six Tubs;' these were, in fact, half tubs, with a seat in each painted green, and placed upright. Thither Bensley was in the habit of repairing alone, at sunrise, to rehearse Pierre, till at last he excited the suspicion of one of the keepers of the park, who wondered to see a stranger, at so early an hour every morning, clenching his fists at the green seats, in a very angry manner. The keeper therefore deemed it to be his duty to watch the stranger's motions, by lying in ambush among the fern, close to the spot; and on hearing him not only say to the tubs,

* My father had then hired a house in a part of Richmond called the Vineyard, in which he lived before he built his house on the banks of the Thames.

'You, my Lords, and Fathers,
As you are pleased to call yourselves, of Venice,'

but also, perceiving him to single out one particular Tub as the 'Great Duke,' of whose wife * he made a very scurrilous mention, he concluded the poor gentleman to be as mad as a March hare. Finding, however, upon repeated watching, that he did no mischief, conceiving too, that abusing the old Doge and the Venetian Senators was not High Treason in England, and moreover recollecting, that he himself, the keeper, was a keeper of parks, and not a keeper of madmen, he let the matter pass, without further notice.

"Bensley, while on the stage, married by accident. He was travelling in a hack post-chaise, which, on turning a sharp corner of the road near Bristol, came in violent contact with a lady on horseback; the fair one was thrown, the traveller leaped from his chaise to her assistance, when, as Rosalind says in the play, 'they no sooner met than they looked, no sooner looked than they loved, no sooner loved'—in short, they became man and wife.† There are various modes of courtship, but it is not, I believe, a common practice to win a lady's heart by knocking her down. His conjugal partner brought him fifteen hundred pounds, a mere nothing even in those days, when matrimonial housekeeping is counterbalanced against the bed and board of a bachelor. With this, and his income as an actor,

* 'And saw your wife, the Adriatic,' &c.
Otway's Venice Preserved.

† Bensley married Miss Cheston at Bristol, Sept. 8, 1772.

they lived in frugal comfort, and in a select circle of acquaintance, distinct from his theatrical brethren, from whose society it was occasionally remarked, he kept somewhat superciliously aloof, till he withdrew from his scenic labours in 1796. He was then appointed to the situation of a barrack master, by his friend Mr. Wyndham, who was at that period Secretary at War.

" Some years before his death, a large fortune was bequeathed to him by his relative, Sir William Bensley, a baronet and an East India Director. Undazzled by riches, Bensley enjoyed his affluence with the liberal moderation of a perfect gentleman; in the vale of existence, without children, and desirous only of a competent provision for his amiable and excellent wife, he declared that his superfluous wealth 'came too late.' His widow, who survived him some years, is now no more.

" In the earliest part of his theatrical life, he lodged in the south-east Covent Garden Piazzas, which have been burned down: and he there saved his life by jumping out of his bed-room window on the first floor during the conflagration. From the foregoing description of his starch manners, who would suppose that he was, in his youth, 'an idle, flashy young dog,' and that Garrick had nicknamed him 'Roaring Bob of the Garden.' "

Epicœne, as will be discovered in a future letter, was not a trump card; so Colman, who never could remain idle, set to work, and produced a farcical comedy.

Garrick performed Lusignan, in Zara, for the last

time on March 7, 1776, and on that night was first represented Colman's Comedy of "The Spleen; or, Islington Spa," in two Acts; the Prologue by Garrick, and the Epilogue by Colman. This piece was not very successful. Garrick in a letter a few days after, writes—

"DEAR COLMAN, Hampton, Friday.

"Mrs. Garrick will wait upon you with great pleasure on Thursday next. Pray let Schomberg be of the party. We have not seen him a long while, and we love him. The Gentleman* is excellent: more when I see you.

"I hope your Spleen will continue. We are jaunting it for a few days."

Colman seems to have been deceived in his expectations respecting this piece, and his conduct on the occasion somewhat resembled that exhibited on the subject of the Clandestine Marriage. He who always appears to have profited by the advice of his early patron, Lord Bath, kept his eye on the 'main chance,' and looked out for the remuneration for his comic drama. The following is Garrick's answer to a communication from Colman on this subject.

"Hampton, April 12, 1776.

"DEAR COLMAN,

"On Tuesday next, in all probability, will finish our six nights of 'The Spleen,' and if you choose it, we will, as I proposed to you, let you have a sixth of the whole receipts, subtracting the expenses; or if you had rather run the

* The periodical Paper already mentioned.

chance of a night, I will tell you all the nights we have, and you shall take your choice of them, and of what play you please with Mrs. Yates, which may either appear as your night, or as a manager's. We have bought two nights, Parsons and Aikin's, the one yesternight, and the other on Tuesday next. We shall meet on Sunday evening, and whatever you will like best, will be best to

My dear Colman, ever and truly your's,

D. Garrick."

Colman, in his reply, alludes to an alternative, of which Garrick's offer barely allows the construction. He complained of the very disadvantageous time of the season, in which 'The Spleen' was produced, and inquired whether it would be too unreasonable in the author to request, and impossible for Garrick to grant, the aid of his own performance on his benefit night? Without that powerful assistance, stuck in edge-wise between the benefits, and overlaid by Ranelagh and Sadler's Wells, the interest of the performers, &c., Colman could see no probability of his deriving from his piece half the emolument that he had hitherto reaped from his labours in the service of the Theatre. Colman's letter concludes pathetically with

"Oh ponder well! be not severe!"

Colman, in the following letter, reminds Garrick that he expected some remuneration for his alteration and adaptation of Epicœne.

"Soho Square, May 25, 1776.

"My Dear Garrick,

"From your never mentioning 'The Silent Woman,' I

am really in doubt whether it has slipped your memory, or whether I am to conclude from your silence that you do not think the piece deserves that indulgence from the theatre usually extended to other altered plays. If the first is the case, I must beg you to excuse my now reminding you of it; if the latter, I have only to regret having given you the trouble, and myself the mortification, of getting it up at your theatre, and to remain, Dear Garrick,

Your's most entirely and most heartily,

G. Colman."

With his customary policy, Garrick thus fought off this application.

"My Dear Sir, Adelphi, May 27, 1776.

"Your letter, which has astonished me, came to my hands at the most unlucky time, as I have so much already upon my mind. Was I in a dream, when I imagined that you gave us the alteration of the 'Silent Woman?' did you not say so, and write so? I think no trouble too much for a performance with a friend's name to it, nor do I ever spare any expense to set it off. 'The Silent Woman,' with all our care, did not succeed; and was left off, under charges, at the fourth night, though we added the 'Jubilee' to it. The impossibility of giving it a fashion, was felt by you, as well as myself.

"If you intended to be considered as the alterer, and not as the donor, why would you delay to this time, to let me know your expectations? You must be sensible, that I would not that you, of all persons, should have a bad bargain.

"Pray let me know what I must do, for I cannot have such a burden upon my mind, at this very distressing time, when my theatrical life is so near its end. It is the trouble of an evil conscience upon my death-bed.

"If I am confused, or unintelligible, impute it to Richard—what an operation!"

It is lamentable to see such misunderstandings between two old and dear friends about 'base Mammon.'

"Soho Square, May 23, 1776.

"My Dear Garrick,

"I am very sorry my letter came so *mal-à-propos*, and still more sorry that you should be disturbed for a single moment with such a trifle. God knows I had no thoughts of profit, or a bargain, about 'The Silent Woman,' yet I really did not pretend to make a gift of it; for to say the truth, at the time I offered it to your theatre, I did not think we were quite on good terms enough to warrant my taking the liberty of making you a present; but I am much pleased and flattered to find that you were of a different opinion.

"As to the popularity of the piece, you can witness for me, that it was, what I never expected from it; like Swift's Mrs. Harris, 'all I stood upon was the credit of the house;' and I must confess myself so zealous for the old school, that I think 'Epicœne,' for the honour of the managers also, ought to keep the stage.* All I endeavoured was to remove the objections that deprived it of a place there, held by pieces every way inferior; and this labour, trifling as it was, I thought might deserve the same consideration allowed to other altered pieces.

"I would not have wrote to you, but from my utter aversion to the smallest idea of reserve with a friend, and

* With all his endeavours, he failed in his purpose. Ben Jonson was, in the first place, a pedant, and, in the second, gave the humours of his day. Few of such a dramatist's writings can long keep the stage. Whenever Jonson has made the passions of universal man his ground-work, he has succeeded best for lasting fame. Nature will always interest and delight; and, therefore, Shakspeare will last as long as Nature herself.

when friends, true friends, once understand each other, there never can subsist any difference.

I am, dear Garrick, most affectionately your's,
G. COLMAN."

On the 10th of June, 1766, the inimitable Garrick, in the height of fame and popularity, retired from the stage. His last appearance was in the play of the Wonder, in the character of Don Felix. It was for the benefit of a charitable institution, and was graced with a brilliant and crowded audience. Garrick made his bow to the public, amidst the loudest applauses ever heard in a theatre.

Colman the younger, in the following remarks, analyzes Garrick's farewell with somewhat too much of asperity.

" The particulars of the termination of Garrick's histrionic course are so fully detailed in theatrical annals, that I shall confine myself to a few observations on his valedictory address: an address which, in my opinion, corroborates what I have advanced already, that whenever Garrick chose to show off as himself, and he generally did so choose, he was almost sure to play that character worse than any other.

" He says to the audience, ' It has been customary with persons, under my circumstances, to address you in a farewell epilogue. I had the same intention, and turned my thoughts that way; but, indeed, I found myself, then, as incapable of writing such an epilogue as I should be, now, of speaking it.' How delicate! what sensibility! how quiver-

ing-all-over with sentiment. But, it is to be recollected, that, Master Davy Garrick was a sly old stager, and a practised epilogue inditer; and whether he threw his leave-taking thoughts upon paper in couplets, or in prose paragraphs, there could be little, if any, difference in his mental struggles, as to the writing, and none at all in the speaking: this alleged paralysis of his powers must apply, therefore, to his prose as well as to his verse, and would have made him as unequal, upon this occasion, to the penning of plain reason as of rhyme; hence, it follows that, although his farewell carries the strongest internal evidence of a factitious speech, he would fain have passed it off for an extempore. Now, such an attempt was adding nonsense to hypocrisy; for observe, he would persuade the town that his feelings disabled him from writing any thing explanatory of them, in his hours of privacy and quiet; but that they permitted him to perform the much more difficult task of describing them before a tumultuous crowd, in a moment of extreme flurry and painful agitation of mind; and, moreover, that he could not utter the very same sentiments of gratitude, if he had composed them, and got them by heart, which he was then uttering without premeditation.*

"To say nothing of the spruce antithesis in the above quotation, his 'writing then,' and his 'speak-

* "Tom Davies, his biographer and panegyrist, seems to have been somewhat credulous on this point: he writes, that 'No premeditation whatever could prepare him for this affecting scene.'"

ing now,' let us go on with him a little further. He proceeds to say, 'The jingle of rhyme and the language of fiction would but ill suit my present feelings.* This unlucky sentence betrays the whole plot at once. Can any observer of nature and art, listening to unstudied diction on one hand, and attentive to laboured composition on the other, read the foregoing paragraph without being convinced that it is the deliberate polish of the pen, and not the genuine flow of the passions? What man, while his affections are in a ferment, and he is yielding to their sway, ever thinks of thus decorating and smoothing his periods? Who, while his bosom is wrung with distress, at parting with his old friends and benefactors, betakes himself to culling nice noun-substantives, selecting figurative expressions, and hunting after cadences? who, then, talks of 'the jingle of rhyme,' or 'the language of fiction.' The wind-up of the address, though bald in its phraseology, and without trope or figure, still smells of the inkstand, and ends just like a letter; as thus:

"'I will very readily agree to my successors having more skill and ability for their station than I have; but I defy them all to take more sincere and more uninterrupted pains for your favour, or to be more truly sensible of it, than is your most obedient,

* "The quaint wording of this sentence, so much at variance with the implication of an off-hand address, was regretted by many of Garrick's friends; by my father, among the rest; who, though his intimacy with him had in some degree cooled, was his well-wisher to the last."

grateful servant.' It is a pity that he had not completed the epistolary form, by adding his name; and then it would have run in the regular way,

" ' Your most obedient, grateful servant,
David Garrick.'

" After all, this taking leave of the town is an awkward business at best; all performers whom I have ever seen or heard of, in this situation, have studied something in writing, without pretending* that they had not so prepared themselves, foreseeing that their nerves would be severely shaken, and that, if they neglected such a precaution, they would, in all probability, when put to the test, be dumbfounded.

" It may seem like dissimulation in an actor, to be mechanically writing down on Monday, a passage expressive of his private sorrow, whereat he is to weep in public next Saturday, yet, when the Saturday comes, and he recites that passage before his old patrons whom he is to meet no more, he is tremblingly alive to the sentiment it expresses, however artificially he may have worded it, and he sheds a tear in heartfelt earnest. And that Garrick was softened and greatly agitated, there can be no doubt; he could not, however, be content to do exactly ' what had been customary with persons under his circumstances ;' prudence, indeed, had suggested a prepared speech, but false taste dictated the composition, and vanity bade him imply that it was an impromptu. Garrick's uncommon abilities had arrived at as close an imitation of nature, as

* " They could not so pretend, if it were in verse ; and they did not, when it was in prose."

perhaps, may be attainable; but he gave preference to art, in instances where Nature alone should have governed his conduct, as in the above case.

" My fullest recollections of him as a performer, are in the characters of Abel Drugger, Benedict, Don Felix, Lusignan, and Richard the Third. An actor super-eminent in such different characters, to say nothing of Hamlet, Lear, Kitely, Ranger, and various others, must have possessed most extraordinary powers of the very highest order; and I shall remember him in them ' while memory holds a seat in this distracted globe.' He did not quit the stage till I was nearly fourteen, and I have shown how well I must have been acquainted with his features, his manners, and his quirks and turns, in private life, which made me more particularly interested in observing him, when I had opportunities of witnessing his talents in public. I may venture therefore an opinion, if my opinion be worth anything, formed upon juvenile reminiscence; I have only, however, to repeat what others have said a thousand times, that,

" Take him for all in all,
I ne'er shall look upon his like again."

I have mentioned the uncommon brilliancy of his eye, but he had the art of completely quenching its fire; as in his acting Sir Anthony Branville, a dramatic personage who talks passionately with the greatest *sang froid*, and whose language, opposed to his temperature, breathes flame like Hecla in Iceland. In this part, I have been told, he made the twin stars which Nature had stuck in his head, appear as dull

as two coddled gooseberries; but his Deaf Man's eye, which I once witnessed at Hampton, evinced his minuteness of observation, and gift of execution.

"There is an expression in the eye of deaf persons, I mean of such as have not lost all perception of sound, which, difficult as it may be to exhibit in mimicry, it is still more difficult to define in writing: it consists of a mixture of dulness and vivacity, in the organs of vision; indicating an anxiety to hear all, with a pretending to hear more than is actually heard, and a disappointment in having lost much; an embarrassed look, between intelligence and something approaching to stupidity;* all this he conveyed admirably; and if I could convey it in words one tithe as well, I should have made myself more intelligible.

"On the whole, with all his superior art in pourtraying nature, it is to be lamented that he outraged her in one character, and that was his own; he overacted the part of Garrick, and it was very bad taste in him to be always performing himself, upon a carpet, as if he had been a fictitious personage on the boards; he converted his companions into critics in the pit, practised clap-traps upon them, and the row of lamps in front of the proscenium was eternally under his nose. "The fact is, no remark was ever more true than that Garrick 'acted both on and off the stage.'

"As Dr. Goldsmith, in his Retaliation, observes, he was—

* The late inimitable Mathews had the art of delineating a deaf person, in perfection.

> ' In praise a mere glutton, he swallow'd what came,
> And the puff of a dunce, he mistook it for fame.'

and after gorging upon the applause of thundering audiences, and judicious critics, his unsatiated grovelling appetite hungered for the admiration of a shoe black or an infant: he would steal a side-long look at a duke's table, to ascertain whether he had made a hit upon the butler and the footmen. Such were the littlenesses of the Great Roscius!"

The trial of the Duchess of Kingston for bigamy about this time, formed the topic of general conversation. Of this *cause célèbre*, George Colman the younger relates the following anecdotes:

"As she was tried by the peers, the interior of Westminster Hall was properly arranged for the occasion; and the trial, which lasted several days in April after the usual opening ceremonies, commenced on the 15th of the month. Tickets of admission were not very plentiful; each peer had only seven on each day, to distribute among his numerous friends, but the Westminster boys always contrived to squeeze in somehow; sometimes they were smuggled in by a nobleman, sometimes by a doorkeeper, and quantities of us ran every day from Dean's Yard, between the school-hours, to get a slice of the Duchess. The nature of the trial in itself excited a lively interest, and afforded ample food for curiosity; and the 'pride, pomp, and circumstance' of such an Assembly; the venerable Hall, superbly fitted up, occupied by the peers of the realm in their robes, who were attended by the

Judges, several Masters in Chancery, Garter King of Arms, the Usher of the Black Rod, with various other officers in the train of the Lord High Steward *pro tempore;* all these, and the crowd of visitors, elegantly dressed, in the places assigned for their accommodation, rendered the scene splendid, solemn, and imposing. When the preponderating 'Guilty upon my Honour,' had un-duchessed the Duchess, she claimed her privilege of peerage,* which, though strongly opposed by the Attorney General, was ultimately allowed, and she was in consequence exempted from any kind of corporal punishment.

"There is a wanton cruelty in the disposition of almost all boys, and, soon after they have passed the age of mutilating flies, and torturing cockchafers, they arrive at that degree of taste when the corporal punishment of a peeress must be thought very good sport: great was the glee, therefore, of the Westminsters, when this bodily correction was mentioned as likely to ensue; and proportionally great was their disappointment when it was obviated. We naturally annexed no other idea than that of scourging, to the term 'corporal punishment,' which term was always so elucidated by our two learned professors of the art, Doctors Smith and Vincent, and our anticipations had been, that we should witness a promenade through London, at the tail of a vehicle, after the manner of the lower class, when convicted of certain minor offences; we expected,

* In right, I presume, of her first marriage, her second having been proved invalid.

however, that the vulgarity of the ceremony would be sublimed as much as possible, that the delinquent duchess would follow a state-cart, built expressly for the occasion, and that no less a personage than the Usher of the Black Rod would act as her *ci-devant* grace's disciplinarian. Some wiseacres among the people had supposed that she would have been condemned to hard labour at Woolwich, on board the Justitia Hulk, then in the river, but a second Kingston-upon-Thames was never intended."

This year produced a revolution in the Theatre Royal, Haymarket. Mr. Foote, who had conducted the affairs of his house with considerable success, and annually acquired a large income as proprietor and manager, now became inclined to part with the concern. The reasons which prompted him to take this step, were supposed to have arisen from an infamous prosecution, which had been maliciously (as was generally believed) instituted against him.

Previously to starting for France in September, 1776, he thus announced his intention to Garrick, of letting his theatre. "There is more of prudence than of pleasure in my trip to the continent: to tell you the truth, I am tired with racking my brain, toiling like a horse, and crossing seas and mountains in the most dreary seasons, merely to pay servants' wages and tradesmen's bills. I have therefore directed my friend Jewel to discharge the lazy vermin of my hell, and to let my hall, too, if he can meet with a proper tenant. Help me to one, if you can."

Colman, who it would seem could not be happy

without the excitement of theatrical management, cast an anxious eye on the Haymarket, and deputed Mr. John Colborne to treat for the property with Foote.

On this subject the following correspondence took place:

"Sir, 8th October, 1776.

"It is now near ten o'clock, and I am but just come from Mr. Foote, with whom I think we shall soon settle this business, should the proceedings of the day meet your approbation. I was obliged to advance one hundred, before he would say any thing, and soon after he felt the same sum, I strove hard to split the other hundred, but he declared he would never take less than sixteen hundred pounds, in which is to be included the unpublished plays during his life, after which they are to be his boy's, but should the renters of the patent be desirous of purchasing them, he will take five hundred pounds now, though he cannot, he says, estimate them at less than one thousand pounds, if to be sold to the trade.

"I am now going to find Mr. Rigg, in conjunction with him, to draw up articles, which I have promised to present on Thursday, before which time I do not doubt, but I shall see or hear from you,

"I am, Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
John Colborne."

The sixteen hundred pounds required by Foote, was not as the purchase money, but as a life-annuity to him, for his patent.

"Sir, Monday, October 14, 1776.

"I presented the amended articles to Mr. Foote this afternoon, which met with a most gracious reception. I

proposed waiting on him to-morrow with the name and person of the principal. This time he told me he was sorry was inconvenient to him, being particularly engaged on that day, Wednesday, and Thursday, but on Friday he should be happy if we would dine with him at four o'clock, at which time I promised to meet him, and I hope this will not be inconvenient to you.

JOHN COLBORNE.

To George Colman, Esq."

"MY DEAR FOOTE, October 18, 1776.

"When I quitted Covent Garden, I never thought of attending to a theatre any more, and accordingly declined the refusal of Garrick's share of Drury Lane; but a report having prevailed some time ago of your intention to part with your property, I was at length persuaded by my friends, that such a theatrical situation, different in many essential respects from any other, would not be ineligible. At my instance, therefore, one of our common friends then applied to you, to know your resolution, at which time you declared the report to be ill founded, and I dropped all thoughts of the business. But having been told by several of our acquaintance that you had lately signified your wish to find a purchaser, and even gone so far as to name your price, I again thought I might, without indelicacy or impertinence, inquire if you were serious. For this purpose I sent Mr. Colborne to you; and though I am not so playhouse mad as not to feel the largeness of the sum he has agreed to on my behalf, nor so vain as to be unconscious of the many superior advantages you possessed, yet I shall, without much fear and trembling, put the last hand to the bargain; only begging that you would not ascribe my reserve, hitherto, on this occasion, to a wrong motive, as it proceeded from my unwillingness to give you unnecessary trouble, mixed with some little reluctance to appear in any theatrical negociation, which was not likely to be concluded.

My proposals, however, having met with your approbation, it is necessary for me to come forward to complete them. I think I have property enough, independent of that which is to be contracted for, to make you quite easy about the payment of your annuity. I shall not be pleased if that, and every other object of the contract, is not settled to your entire satisfaction; for I not only wish your solid interests to be consulted, but am very desirous that we may appear to act like two friends, rather than a couple of mere dealers. I understood, you were yourself of opinion, that this matter should remain in silence for the present, and indeed, I have some reasons for wishing that my name may not be made public immediately; yet they are not so important, as not to give way to your convenience or inclination.

I am, Dear Foote, very faithfully your's,
G. COLMAN."

"What time do you expect Mr. Colborne at North End? and when do you go yourself? I mean to follow you as soon as possible, for I long to speak to you."

Foote's reply was brief.

"MY DEAR SIR, Suffolk Street, Friday, Oct. 18.

"I appointed Mr. Colborne to dine with me this day, when I shall be happy to see you. I should certainly prefer you, both as a successor and a paymaster; I do not recollect any material alteration, but however we shall soon see one another.

Your's most sincerely,
SAM. FOOTE."

This negociation ended in the transfer of the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, to Colman, in consideration of the before-mentioned annuity and some particular advantages as a performer; but

Foote died soon after the first half year of the annuity became due, October 21, 1777.

Colman now wrote to Garrick, stating that in this matter he felt that he ought to have waited for his return to town and good advice, but that the affair was in embryo when Garrick departed for Lord Spencer's; that he had called at the Adelphi, and at the theatre several times, but supposed that Garrick was so lost in the dust made by the 'new brooms,'* that he could not seize a favourable moment, and, indeed, did not believe Foote to be in earnest. He then alludes to an accommodation with the proprietors of Drury Lane and Covent Garden Theatres as to the length of their seasons, and is sure that Garrick would advise him not to submit to oppression.

Garrick's reply is dated November 4, 1776.

"My Dear Colman,

"I have this nasty gout still nibbling at me, and would fain damp my spirits. You believe, I trust, that I am the last man who would advise you to bear oppression, as I think you are the last man to take such advice; though I am catechised on all sides about your purchase, I will not own it, nor shall I, till I have your leave. Yet in the name of good management, how can it be long a secret? for you must, like a wise general, prepare for the campaign. Our facetious friend, Foote, I hear, damns himself that there is no such thing, and Jewel† only owns to a treaty, but no bargain yet

* A double allusion. The new managers, Linley, Sheridan, and Ford, to whom Garrick was about to sell his property in Drury Lane. Their first season opened with a prelude by Colman, entitled 'New Brooms.'

† Jewel was Foote's confidant and treasurer: he remained with Colman in the same capacities.

struck. I suppose HE would rather not proclaim his abdication, till the trial is over; that will soon be, and then you will come forth.

"If you wits and managers, I don't include Messrs. Leake and Fisher* in this number, are not too much of the game-cock breed, you may settle the matters without sparring. They seem to be much hurt at the one hundred nights for the Fantoccini, all the three houses cry out murder, and intend, as I hear, to petition against it. This I suppose cannot affect you.

"However busy and anxious I might be for the new brooms, I am always constant to my old friends, and shall be very sincere, however fallible, in my advice to you.

Your's ever and most truly,

D. GARRICK."

"I saw you had secured one author yesterday; much good may he do you, adieu and adieu!"

The following letter from Richard Cumberland, the well-known contributor to the stage, and republic of letters, refers to the tragedy 'The Battle of Hastings,' which was produced two years afterwards at Drury Lane, and was very coolly received.

"Queen Anne Street, Sept. 1776,

"DEAR SIR,, Saturday, 3 o'clock.

"A friend of mine, I believe, has made you acquainted with a rejection I have met from the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre. I have not presumption enough in my own behalf to say that they are not warranted in what they have done, neither am I attempting to traverse any right which is in them, and which they may properly exercise.

* Messrs. Leake and Fisher were the representatives, to whom the shares of Messrs. Rutherford and Powell in Covent Garden Theatre had devolved.

At the same time I would in no period of my life desert what may prove to be for the interests of literature in general, what ridicule soever may fall upon me in the upshot. In this light I ask you, as a scholar and an author of genius, if you have any objection to read and judge my piece. The rejection was peremptory, general, and prohibitory of any reply. I moved in arrest of judgment, which I had too much reason to call in question, considering where it was lodged, but was denied an appeal by the very gentlemen, who not a week before had exhibited 'The Man of Reason.'* My tragedy cost me great pains and much attention; hath been many years in hand; is entirely original in plan, popular in its subject, and free of all imitation.

"The opinions of men exceedingly high in the republic of letters, have been unanimous, and more than warmly, in its favour. You will not wonder, if such authority makes me hesitate about acquiescing under the veto of a junta of proprietors, whose education has not started with the Muses, and whose habits have been little calculated to make them critics in literature. I should add, that my piece was accepted by Mr. Garrick, and had a place, for this season, but was withdrawn by me for reasons not worth troubling you with. I have faithfully told you its history, and wait your decision with the respect, with which

I am, Sir, your most obedient humble Servant,

RICHARD CUMBERLAND."

Colman, who possessed great tact, and knew the man he had to deal with, sent the following guarded reply to the irritable author, who was afterwards brought forward by the inimitable Sheridan as Sir

* A Comedy by Hugh Kelly,—acted only one night.

Fretful Plagiary in The Critic, or A Tragedy Rehearsed.

" Soho Square, Saturday Night.

" Dear Sir,

" With the present directors of Covent Garden Theatre, I was unfortunately engaged in a dispute during more than half the time I was connected with them, and there have been some misunderstandings between us since our separation. My suffrage, therefore, in favour of your tragedy would rather be ascribed to motives of ill will to them, than to a love of justice, and a laudable zeal for the honour of literature. There is not another man so peculiarly situated. I flatter myself, therefore, that you will, on these considerations, excuse my declining to read and judge of your tragedy, whose merits may be rested so much more confidently on the testimony of those respectable opinions which you have already collected.

" I should have answered your favour by the bearer, but could not withdraw from company, with whom I was at that moment engaged.

I am, Sir,
Your most obedient humble servant,
G. Colman."

About this period the performers belonging to the Drury Lane Theatrical Fund, determined to present a medal to Garrick, the founder of that excellent institution; and through the medium of King, they solicited Colman to pen an address for them. For this purpose, King addressed the following letter to Colman :—

" Great Queen Street, Feb. 5, 1777.

" Dear Sir,

" After what passed the last time I had the pleasure of

seeing you, I shall not trouble with an apology for sending the enclosed, which, by the by, I had mislaid, and could not find till yesterday. The part of it which describes the medal intended to be presented, I have drawn my pen through, as the device is totally changed. Indeed I think a description of it wholly unnecessary; however, lest you should be of a different opinion, I send you the best account of it I can.

"The design is by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Two busts on one therm, Nature and Shakspeare; Garrick unveiling both at once, by throwing back a large piece of drapery.

"I am glad I have been able to prevail with the gentlemen who drew the matter I send you, to give it up, and doubly so, that they all seem to join me in the opinion that you are the person most likely to draw up an address, that may to futurity appear unexceptionable.

I am, dear Sir,
Your well wisher and very humble Servant,
Tho. King."

Colman's Address, which was adopted, is subjoined:—

"The Incorporated Actors belonging to the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, humbly beg leave to present their Perpetual President, David Garrick, Esq., with the Medal that accompanies this Address, in testimony of their gratitude for his having raised and supported, by his excellent performance on the Stage, and finally established by an Act of Parliament, obtained by his interest, and at his sole expense, the Theatrical Fund; * hoping he will

* This Fund is distinct from that of Covent Garden.

condescend to wear this small memorial of their affection for him, whenever he shall honour their meetings with his presence, as a faint token of their respect for his character as a man, of their admiration of his unequalled talents as an actor, as well as an acknowledgment of the high sense they entertain of the honour and happiness they enjoyed under the direction of a Manager whose virtues and abilities have so long and so justly been encouraged and applauded by the united voice of the public."

Colman, like an experienced manager, now began to look out for his Summer Company. The Theatre Royal, Bath, was then, and for many subsequent years, was conceived to be the nursery in which the dramatic plants were to be reared, preparatory to their transplantation to the London stage. Colman accordingly wrote to Henderson and Edwin, inviting them to a London engagement at the Haymarket. Two more fortunate provincial engagements than these were never made by a manager.

The following letter from Henderson is modest and sensible :

" Dear Sir, Bath, Feb. 12th, 1777.

" I should not so long have delayed the honour of writing to you, if I had not been extremely busied with new characters, and with the little interests of my benefit, which is just over. I played Leon for the first time, and think, if I may trust the compliments of my friends, that it may be one of my characters at the Haymarket. I have also, since you left Bath, played Oakley in your incomparable comedy, and hope you will think me fit to be entrusted with it.

" Several judicious friends, here, and in London, have advised me to be careful of appearing in Shylock at first,

as they think Mr. Macklin so strongly fixed in the prepossessions of the people, as to make it very dangerous for me to attack that character; I mean for my first appearance, besides the unfavourable impression which, they argue, such a character will leave on people's minds. What weight these will have on you, Sir, I know not, but I must own I cannot help being biassed by them. It has been suggested to me that some new character would be safer; I mean by new, some revived play, as was the case for Mr. Powell, when you so judiciously altered Philaster for him. Your extensive knowledge of the drama will at once determine, if there is any dormant piece fit to be awakened, or in which I could awake to any advantage; if there is not, I submit to you, whether I should not appear in Hamlet, or some other natural character.

"Do you think, Sir, it would be improper to prepare an occasional Prologue, which I might speak myself, or might be spoken of me? I should be afraid to hazard these tedious egotisms, if I did not recollect that you have thought it worth your while to engage me, and will most probably think it worth your while to place me in the most advantageous light.

I am, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

J. Henderson."

Edwin had indeed been dragged through one season (1775), in the Haymarket, under Foote's management; but his talents were then so little exercised, that he was considered to be new to the town in 1777. In the letter which follows he makes a very modest request for a small addition to the terms proposed by Colman.

"Sir, Bath, March 4th, 1777.

"The business of this theatre lately has prevented me from turning any thoughts to other matters, which I hope

you will excuse, as I ought, upon receipt of your's, to have informed you that though I wish the admiral* in London, next summer, the expense of travelling and living there is so great, that without an addition to my salary it will be impossible for me to undertake it; for if the boy goes, my wife and another child must accompany him. My own cast is inclosed, with a list of the few parts which Mrs. Edwin has done, who pretends to no great merit, but as numbers are sometimes wanted, she has a very good study, and might upon an emergency supply the place of a better actress. If therefore with her assistance, and Jack's performance, you can add two guineas per week to the three already promised, it will support me the summer, and that only, having a large family. I experienced some little difficulty last summer from the smallness of my salary, and indeed should not have thought of London again, if I had not some dependence on your good nature, in placing me in a favourable light, for the salary you give is less even than Mr. Foote's was, his being a guinea each acting night, the truth of which Mr. Jewel's book will evince. My son has sung upon the stage, since you saw him, and has gained I think more reputation than he did as a speaker his ear being remarkably good. If you approve of the above request, I shall take great pains to make the boy deserving of your notice,

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

J. Edwin."

Henderson, in the following letter, expresses forcibly his apprehensions of London criticism, and points particularly to Mr. Woodfall. This critic

* Edwin's son Jack, a mere child, who had acted the Admiral, in the farce of Lilliput.

might have been a very formidable person in his day, but had his advice been followed, an excellent actor would have been lost to the public.

" Dear Sir, Bath, March 16, 1777.

" I persuade myself that you, who are so well acquainted with the fatigues of a theatrical life, will excuse my not having sooner replied to your favour of the 18th February last. I hope you will not imagine, that what I before urged to you proceeded from any diffidence whatever, in your politeness or your kind intentions towards me, I submitted, what I had heard on the subject to your consideration, not so much to be controverted, as decided; I am convinced by your arguments, and shall cheerfully be governed by them.

" But you frighten me when you tell me that ' much is expected from me.' I have experienced something of the severity of London critics, from Mr. Woodfall, who saw me here at the beginning of this season, whose opinion contributes to fill me with apprehensions. He very kindly advises me to stay where I am, cultivate my private character, and resign all hopes of fame and fortune to those who are better qualified by nature to contend for them. He allows me indeed to understand my author, or to speak, as if I understood him, but that it seems is but a feeble ballast against the ponderous objections that will be made to my figure, my voice, and my manner. I remember, too, that those articles were so much insisted on by a lady of this place, that she publicly preferred another actor in Shylock, because he played it so like a gentleman. This was surely a refinement on Lord Chesterfield, who, fond as he was of the graces, would hardly have wished to see them hovering round the Jewish gaberdine of Shylock.

" I sincerely thank you, Sir, for the assiduity with which

you promise to correct my faults, and will express my gratitude, by the most earnest endeavours to remove them.

I am, dear Sir,
Your most obliged, humble Servant,
JOHN HENDERSON."

George Colman, Soho Square.

We now resume George Colman the younger's account of the characters of the day.

" Among the many conspicuous persons who visited my father, some were so much the juniors of others, that I have been promoted '*labentibus annis*' to associate with them, as the ancients dropped off; and thus my father's youngest guests became, at last, my senior friends. Of these I may enumerate the names of Sheridan, Erskine, afterwards Lord Erskine, and the witty Joseph Jekyll, and amiable as he is witty; for we may say of him, as Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, wrote of Cowley the poet, ' His fancy flows with great speed, and, therefore, it is very fortunate to him that his judgment is equal to manage it. His wit is so tempered, that no man had ever reason to wish it to be less.'

" I may surprise some, and offend others, by saying that I think Sheridan did not excel in light conversation; at least, not to that degree which might be expected from his transcendent abilities. Many men of inferior powers were, in my humble conception, pleasanter dinner companions; his son Tom, for instance. I admit that nobody sitting down with him, for the first time, and ignorant of his abilities, could have mistaken him for a common-place character; nor would the evening pass without

some thoughts, or turns of expression, escaping him, indicative of genius; but he wanted the flickering blaze of social pleasantry, the playful lightning of familiar discourse. His style appeared to me more an exercise than desultory table-talk. I have heard him, late in the evening, recapitulate nearly all that had been said at table, and comment upon it with much ingenuity, and satire; but, to say nothing of people disliking to find their careless chat thus remembered, and summed up, this was rather speechifying than conversing; and less fit for a dinner-party than for a debating society. It was turning a private eating-room into St. Stephen's Chapel, making the guests representatives of counties, towns, and boroughs, and the master of the mansion, Speaker of the House of Commons. This habit of harangue grew so much upon Sheridan in his declining days, that he would, in answering the observation of any person in company, call him 'the honourable gentleman.'

"The late Joseph Richardson, Sheridan's '*fidus Achates*,' was, with all his good-nature and temper, a huge lover of this particular kind of disputation. Tell Richardson where you dined yesterday, and he would immediately inquire,—'Had you a good day? was there much argument?'

"My father often met Lord, then Mr. Erskine in the street, and invited him to dinner on that same day; on these occasions, our party which, when I was at home, formed a trio, might as well have been called a duet, for I was only a listener; indeed my father was little more, for Erskine was then young

at the bar, flushed with success, and enthusiastic in his profession. He would, therefore, repeat his pleadings in each particular case; this I thought dull enough, and congratulated myself, till I knew better, when the oration was over. But here I reckoned without my host, for when my father observed that the arguments were unanswerable, 'By no means, my dear Sir,' would Erskine say; 'had I been counsel for *A* instead of *B*, you shall hear what I would have advanced on the other side; then we did hear, and I wished him at the *forum!* No two companions could have been worse coupled than Lord Erskine and my father, for the lawyer delighted in talking of himself and the bar, and the manager of himself and the theatre. Erskine was a gifted man, and, what is better, a good man. In the early part of his career, he was considered a great man; but as John Moody says of Sir Francis Wrong-head, 'he could no' hawld it.'

"In addition to those already mentioned, we had a heterogeneous body of visitors, consisting of noble, gentle, and simple; and when my father commenced his lease of Foote's patent in the Haymarket Theatre, we experienced a fresh influx of sundry dramatists, and performers new to London; some of whom he occasionally asked to dine with him.

"And, now, for the important 1777, to me at least important, for then did my evil genius enthrone himself upon a thunder-trunk, with a roll of play-bills in his hand; and, beckoning me into a *theatridium**, where the presiding muses gasped for air and

* From the Greek diminutive, Θεατρίδιον, a little theatre.

elbow-room, cried 'Come hither, and learn to be a dramatist.' I obeyed the mandate, 'nothing loath,' and considered not, in the giddiness of youth, that the tempter only showed me the fascinations of the stage, while he let fall a drop-scene upon its discouragements; but this needs explanation.

"My father, having in 1774, sold his share in the property of Covent Garden, and lain fallow for three years, just at this time completed his contract with Foote for the Haymarket Theatre, on terms which are not fully nor clearly explained, in any printed account that I have seen; the particulars were as follows:

"He agreed to rent the summer theatre, in the Haymarket, which Foote held by a patent for his life, granting to him a life annuity of sixteen hundred pounds, in half-yearly payments of eight hundred pounds: he was to pay him, also, for his services as an actor, although, as it happened, he only performed three times; and he purchased, for five hundred pounds, the copyright of his unpublished dramatic pieces. I should have mentioned, that this patent enabled the holder of it to open his house annually, for the acting of all English dramatic performances, from the 15th of May to the 15th of September, inclusive. With the theatre, certain decayed and moth-eaten articles, which Foote dignified by the collective name of a wardrobe, and which might have produced altogether, at a sale, if well puffed by a knowing auctioneer, about twenty pounds at the utmost, were made over to the lessee. The fading gaiety of Major Sturgeon's

regimentals, trimmed with tarnished copper-lace, was splendour itself, compared with the other thread-bare rubbish of this repository.

" Foote's stock plays were in fact chiefly of his own writing, and his dramatis personæ required little more than a few common coats and waist-coats; when he wanted more habiliments than he possessed, he resorted to a *friperie* in Monmouth Street, not to purchase, but to job them by the night; and so vilely did some of the apparel fit the actors, that he was often obliged to make a joke of the disgrace, and get the start of the audience, if he could, in a laugh against his own troop of tatterde-mallions. There was a skeleton of a man belonging to his company, who performed a minor part in the scene of a debating club, in which Foote acted the president; this *anatomie vivante* was provided with a coat which would not have been too big even for the late Stephen Kemble, the arms were particularly wide, and the cuffs covered his hands: Foote, during the debate, always addressed this personage as the 'much respected gentleman in the sleeves.' So improvident was he, that he even hired most of the printed music which was played between the acts, whereby he had given its original price ten times over; and in the end, not a scrap of it was his own property.

" The paradoxical celebrity which Foote maintained on the stage was very singular, his satirical sketches were scarcely dramas, and he could not be called a good legitimate performer. Yet there is no Shakspeare or Roscius upon record who, like

Foote, supported a theatre for a series of years, by his own acting, in his own writings, and, for ten years of the time, upon a wooden leg!

"This prop to his person I once saw standing by his bed-side, ready dressed in a handsome silk stocking, with a polished shoe and gold buckle, awaiting the owner's getting up: it had a kind of tragi-comical appearance, and I leave to inveterate wags the ingenuity of punning upon a Foote in bed and a leg out of it. The proxy for a limb thus decorated, though ludicrous, is too strong a reminder of amputation to be very laughable. His undressed supporter was the common wooden leg, like a mere stick, which was not a little injurious to a well-kept pleasure-ground. I remember following him, after a shower of rain, upon a nicely rolled terrace, in which he stumped a deep round hole, at every other step he took; till it appeared as if the gardener had been there with his dibble, preparing, against all horticultural practice, to plant a long row of cabbages in a gravel walk.

"My father, as the proposing renter of the Haymarket Theatre, employed a matter-of-fact person of business to negotiate for him; and Foote did not know, till the terms had been fully agreed upon, the principal with whom he was in treaty. He often, however, met the principal at dinner pending the transaction, little dreaming that he was in company with his future lessee. On these occasions, as it was publicly avowed that the patent was about to be farmed, there was no indelicacy in talking about it to Foote, and one day when this subject was in-

troduced, he turned towards my father, saying, 'Now, here is Mr. Colman, an experienced manager, he will tell you that nobody can conduct so peculiar a theatrical concern as mine, but myself; but there is a fat headed fellow of an agent, who has been boring me every morning at breakfast with terms from some blockhead who knows nothing about the stage, but whose money burns in his pocket.' * 'Playhouse mad, I presume,' said my father. 'Right,' replied Foote, 'and if bleeding will bring him to his senses, he 'll find me a devilish good doctor.'

"When the parties met to sign and seal, any body but Foote, who never blushed in his life, might have looked a little foolish, upon recollection of the bleeding system, which he had unconsciously avowed to his patient. The stipulated rent was excessive, considering the average profits at that time of this limited theatre, and the great risk to be run of losing even these, by unavoidably entering upon a new and enlarged plan of action, when Foote's plays, and his performance in them could no longer be almost the sole support of the establishment. As it happened, however, the lessee had much the best of the contract; for, not long after its completion, in stepped Death, that fatal terminator of all Life Annuities, and took off the English Aristophanes who had himself taken off so many. Poor Foote

* Dashwood, in Murphy's "Know your own Mind," a comedy, played at Covent Garden Theatre in 1777, was an avowed portrait, and conveys to posterity the best idea of that conversational prodigy.

died at Dover * before the second half-yearly payment became due, my father therefore, after having disbursed only eight hundred pounds, the first half-yearly payment to the Annuitant, and being in possession as lessee, quietly held the theatre as his successor. Of course, he had to purchase all the property in it, which his predecessor might have left behind him; but from the account I have just given of the wardrobe and the orchestra, the nothingness of such a purchase may be easily estimated. But the assertion, that the patent, after the death of my father, was transferred to me, is erroneous. My father, and I after him, held this property under the gracious protection of the Crown, and opened the house, by annual License of the Lord Chamberlain. The Theatre, which has been lately built near the old site, on the east side of the Haymarket, is carried on in the same way, with an understanding that the yearly permission will be always renewed, as a *quamdiù se bene gesserit* Licence, but there has been no Patent for a Summer Theatre in London since Foote's death.

* A letter dated Dover, Oct. 22, this year, states,—"Yesterday died here, on his way to Paris, Samuel Foote, Esq. He left London, as we are told, on Sunday, and when he arrived here was taken ill, soon after which, he was seized with an apoplectic fit, from which he never recovered. He was attended on his journey only by a servant."

END OF VOLUME THE FIRST.

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE COLMAN FAMILY.

CHAPTER I.

1777—1778.

Colman's new Company at the Haymarket Theatre — John Palmer—Parsons—Charles Bannister—Miss Barsanti—Foote —Henderson—Edwin—Miss Farren—The younger Colman's Opinion of Henderson's Acting—Foote's Jealousy and *bon mot* —Digges—Blissett—Colman's Epilogue to the School for Scandal—Injunction—The little Theatre described—Female Chevalier—Suicide—Heads on fire—Horace Walpole—Sir W. W. Wynn—Wynnstay Theatricals—Both the Colmans, Actors—George, the younger, sent to Oxford—Matriculation at Christchurch—College Adventures—Early Accommodation Bills—Fellow Collegians—Lords Wellesley, Bathurst, Grenville, Colchester—Sir T. Tyrwhitt—Samuel Whitbread—Mad Poet Harding.

THE leading feature of the revolution which took place in the Haymarket Theatre, in consequence of farming the Patent, says George Colman the younger, was the formation of a company of performers to act in all branches of the drama, and to overleap the narrow bounds within which Foote had chiefly confined his stage by his own plays, and his own performances in them. As the List of the Company on

starting this novel undertaking (in May 1777), may be a desideratum to amateurs, I subjoin it, with a few notes attached.

Messrs. Aickin,	Messrs. Edwin,	Messrs. Kenney,
Bannister, C.	Egan,	Massey,
Bedford,	Fearon,	Palmer,
Blissett,	Foote,	R. Palmer,
Bransby,	Francis,	Parsons,
Davies,	Griffiths,	Pierce,
J. Davies,	Henderson,	Stevens,
Digges,	Hitchcock,	Walker.
Dubellamy,	Jackson,	

Younger, Deputy-Manager :—Brownsmith, Prompter.

Miss Barsanti,	Miss Hall,	Miss Morris,
Mrs. Collis,	Mrs. Hitchcock,	Mrs. W. Palmer,
Mrs. Davis,	Mrs. Hunter,	Miss Platt,
Miss Farren,	Mrs. Jewell,	Mrs. Poussin,
Mrs. Fearon,	Mrs. Love,	Miss Twist.
Mrs. Gardner,	Mrs. Massey,	

Mons. Georgi's pupils, children, as dancers.*

And on the revival of Garrick's Dramatic Entertainment, called "Lilliput," the parts were enacted by Masters Edwin, Hitchcock, and Pulley; and by Misses Besford, P. Farren, Francis, and Hitchcock.

The theatre opened May 15th, with my father's comedy of the English Merchant, and Lilliput; it then closed until the 28th. Its closing directly after its opening is easily accounted for, by the attempt to enter into a competition with the two great winter houses, the proprietors of which were not yet preparing to shut their doors for the summer. Empty benches at the Haymarket were the consequence of this experiment; and no wonder, when so weak a rivalry, in an incipient scheme, was set up against the attractions at Drury Lane and

* See Biog. Dramatica, 1812.

Covent Garden. What could be expected from the 'English Merchant,' a milk-and-water, though pretty comedy, from Voltaire's *Ecossaise*, and brought out ten years before? Little more could be hoped for by a revival of Lilliput, one of the flimsiest of Garrick's fiddle-faddle farces, although a new scene and a procession were added to it. This piece was entirely acted by children, with the exception of the character of Gulliver: but the 'little eyases' were not 'most tyrannically clapp'd for it.*'

"On the 28th, the little theatre re-opened to play three times a week, for the season of the great houses was then it seems drawing towards its termination, and as the cats were going to sleep, the mouse ventured again to look out at its peep-hole. After the eleventh of June, the Haymarket theatre, having the town to itself, its entertainments were continued nightly through each week of the season, Sundays of course excepted: this was one of the grand points of speculation, and it succeeded, as an improvement upon Foote's old plan, who only opened his doors on every alternate night.

"But before the house had commenced its operations, it was the opinion of the knowing ones that the chances rather threatened a losing game for the lessee, as the company of performers, with reference to those who were already known in London, appeared to be meagre in first-rate talent. Among the men, indeed, there were two excellent comedians,

* "There is, Sir, an aiery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of the question, and are most tyrannically clapp'd for 't; these are now the fashion; and so berattle the common stages," &c.—*Hamlet*, Act. II. sc. 2.

and established favourites, John Palmer and Parsons; the elder Bannister was then also in full voice, and very popular, as a singer: after these, we must descend to Aickin, commonly called 'Belly Aickin,' to distinguish him from his brother 'Tyrant Aickin;' nobody could be better in his secondary or perhaps *thirdly* line of characters. Robert Palmer was then a rising young actor, who was afterwards unique in a few sketches of dramatic character, but he never attained the highest walks. Dubellamy should not be quite forgotten, who had, *faute de mieux*, stood in the place of a secondary singer for several years at Covent Garden, but he was very awkward in his deportment, and remarkable, while singing and speaking, for the cocking up of his thumbs. This person was originally a shoemaker; and it must be confessed that his mode of treading the stage sometimes provoked a remembrance of the proverb, *ne sutor ultrà crepidam.** Fearon was a respectable and useful actor, in a minor line, but I only notice him on account of a few short characters, dramatic *morçeaux*, which he was noted for acting admirably, as Stern, a sailor, in O'Keeffe's farce of 'The Positive Man;' Zedan, in Mrs. Inchbald's play of 'Such Things Are;' and two or three others. Beyond these, there were on

* In proof of "what is bred in the bone," it was told of Dubellamy, that, when he had quitted his original occupation for the stage, he one day gallanted some ladies to a shop in Cranbourn Alley, who went thither to purchase shoes. In his great zeal to see them well fitted, he found such technical fault with the articles offered to them for sale, that the shopman 'spied a brother,' and could bear it no longer. "Come, come, master," said he, to Dubellamy, "this is telling the secrets of the trade, and that's not fair to one another."

the list no male performers familiar to the London boards worth mentioning, and still fewer females.

Of these last, Miss Barsanti, was by far the most distinguished in talent. This lady was said to be of an Italian family, but there was nothing foreign in her dialect or manner. She made her first appearance in 1772, at Covent Garden Theatre, on the opening of the season, in a prelude written by my father, expressly for her introduction ; it gave her an opportunity of displaying her merits, not only as an actress, but as a mimic of both Italian and English singers. I can remember, although I was then not eleven years old, seeing her act Estifania, to Woodward's Copper Captain, with a great deal of spirit and good effect. During this year, 1777, she married a Mr. Lesley ; and after his death became the wife of Daly, manager of the Dublin theatre ; and, in consequence, maintained an eminent position upon the Irish stage for many years. Mrs. Gardner had been long established in Foote's company, and was well received as his Mrs. Cadwallader, Mrs. Sneak, and various other comic characters in his own pieces.* Mrs. Jewell is also to be recorded as one of his hundred ; she had played his young ladies in the love line, occasionally sprinkled with songs ; and had played them so long, that if time strengthened our title to youth, nobody could have disputed her claim to remaining in possession of such characters. Mrs. Love, a respectable second and third rate representative of the comic old goodies, many play-goers must still remember.

* Mrs. Gardner made her *début* in 1763 at Drury Lane, as Miss Prue in Congreve's "Love for Love."

" Here ends my enumeration of all the regulars worth enumerating. Foote himself can scarcely be included as one of the company, for he performed only three times during the season, on the 11th, 25th, and 30th of July, and although his re-appearance was advertised, it was postponed again and again, through illness. He had ' fretted and strutted his hour,' and Fate decreed that he should be ' heard no more.'

" The dearth, however, of superior abilities, which might have been perceptible in the above *Corps Dramatique*, was completely remedied by three new performers, who made so strong an impression upon the town, that they evinced the excellence of the manager's judgment in having selected them. These were Henderson and Edwin, and Miss Farren, Any one of these, coming singly, would have been a most happy acquisition of lustre, in a hemisphere where Palmer and Parsons were the only two very brilliant luminaries; but coming all together, the additional stars produced a constellation, and the Haymarket welkin was in a blaze. It is needless now to record their subsequent engagements at the larger theatres, or to trace them through their career of celebrity.

" On June the 11th, 1777, Henderson made his appearance in Shylock. Having long been spoken of as a second theatrical prodigy, the whole circle of critics attended to give judgment on his abilities, which was very far from unfavourable from the plaudits bestowed on his most interesting scenes. Mr. Henderson discovered in this character considerable merit; by nice discrimination he gave

point to some situations unknown to Macklin. It must not be inferred, however, that they played the character upon the whole so well as Macklin; for not being blessed with such an Israelitish visage, Henderson was under the necessity of having recourse to art to mould his features into the Jewish mask, which nature of her own accord so completely stamped upon Macklin. To this perhaps may be attributed Macklin's ease and superiority in Shylock; which no doubt led the wag, when asked by him to write his epitaph, to reply in this laconic distich:—

'Here lies the Jew,
'That Shakspeare drew.'

Lord Camden in a letter to Garrick, August 11, 1777, says:—"Your Birmingham counterfeit has stolen your buskin, and runs away with all your applause into the bargain; but I shall soon see him stripped to the skin and exposed in all his Scotch nakedness to the world. I hope your friend, Colman, is not privy to the trash we see every day in the papers to put off this clumsy fellow. Charles Fox dined here yesterday, and thinks as I do of Henderson."

Notwithstanding this piece of flattery to Garrick, the subjoined fact will prove that the manager of the Haymarket theatre was of a different opinion.

"Mr. Colman, when he engaged Mr. Henderson to perform at the Theatre Royal in the Haymarket, agreed to pay him a certain sum for the season, and he was to make the most of him. In consequence of this agreement, that rising actor has been kept actively employed during the whole summer. As

the receipts, however, much exceeded Mr. Colman's expectations, he desired Mr. Henderson to fix on whichever night he thought most advantageous for a benefit. As soon as the entertainment on the evening of Mr. Henderson's benefit was over, the treasurer delivered him the account, at the head of which there stood this line :

	£.	s.	d.
House Charges, by Mr. Colman's order,	0	0	0.

There is something so liberal both in the manner and the matter of this compliment, that it ought not to be passed by without remark. It does Mr. Colman infinite honour, and it is to be hoped it may serve as an example to other managers, wherever extraordinary merit appears."

George Colman the younger, thus speaks of Henderson :—

" Without pausing to inquire into the impartiality of Garrick's censure upon any fellow-artist, which was at least equivocal, when he compared the silver tones of Barry with the hooting of an owl, he plainly acknowledged in the midst of his dispraise, Henderson's capabilities, nay even pronounced him a phenomenon ; and however injudicious friends, with Cumberland at the head of them, might have operated upon his ' sparks of fire,' it did not appear upon his arrival in town that they had raked them out ; on the contrary, something, his own genius and study, most probably had blown them into a flame, and after they had increased the heat of the Haymarket Theatre in the dog-days, no Bath stove ever warmed London audiences at Christmas more to their satisfaction.

" Henderson seems, in his style of acting, to have followed, though not servilely copied, the very man who reprobated his manner. As to his Hamlet being ' a mixture of tragedy, comedy, pastoral, farce, and nonsense,'* how any body ever did, or could give a touch of the pastoral in Hamlet, I cannot comprehend; but in respect to the other ingredients, are they not exactly those of which Shakspeare has been pleased to compose the character? The Don John of Henderson, which the mighty Roscius condemned, was in my mind very Garrickian: his Falstaff, a part which was to Garrick a *noli me tangere*, was as rich a specimen of acting, *quoad* the fat knight, as I ever witnessed.

" It is not easy to understand Garrick by his ' paving, when he is emphatic,' whether it was meant that he rammed down his words with his lungs, or his action, there is no denying that Henderson had contracted some bad habits in deportment: such as an odd mode of receding from parties on the stage, with the palms of his hands turned outward; and thus backing from one of the dramatis personæ, when he was expressing happiness at meeting. With these adventitious faults, he had to contend against physical drawbacks, his eye wanted expression, and his figure was not well put together. My father was anxious to start him in characters whose dress might either help or completely hide personal deficiencies, accordingly, it was arranged that the first two personations should be Shylock and Hamlet, in

* See Garrick's Letter to Colman, from Bath, dated April 20, 1775.

which the Jew's gaberdine and the Prince of Denmark's 'inky cloak' and 'suit of solemn black' were of great service. I know not whether Falstaff immediately followed these; but whenever he did come, Sir John's proportions were not expected to present a model for the students of the Royal Academy. By this management, the actor's talents soon made sufficient way to baffle such ill-natured remarks as might have been expected upon symmetry, and the audience was prepared to admit, when he came to the lovers and heroes, that

'Before such merit all objections fly.'

"I do not mean by what I have said to cry up Henderson beyond his deserts, but to protest against running him down: he was many degrees below the standard of Garrick's theatrical genius, and many degrees above the mark of his critical detraction.

"The memory of Edwin, however, is not so old that I have much to say that is new of him: there are sufficient documents of his being the best burletta singer that ever had been, or perhaps ever will be, and of his obligations to O'Keeffe, and of O'Keeffe to him, through the reciprocity of author and actor. What has not yet, I believe, been observed of him is, that nature, in gifting him with the *vis comica*, had dealt towards him differently from low comedians in general, for she had enabled him to look irresistibly funny, with a very agreeable if not handsome set of features; and while he sung in a style which produced roars of laughter, there was a melody in some of the upper tones of his

voice that was beautiful. There was no medium in his performance of the various characters allotted to him—he was either excellent or execrable, and it might be said of his acting, as my father in one of his farces makes a gourmand remark upon Shakspeare's writing, ' it was like turtle, the lean of it might perhaps be worse than the lean of any other meat, but there was a quantity of green fat about it which was delicious.' I do not quote accurately, not having the book before me; but Edwin had a great deal of green fat, his good acting had a copious range, for besides his Lingos, his Peeping Toms, *et hoc genus omne*, many authors of his day were indebted to him ; I, among others, particularly for his performance of Trudge and Gregory Gubbins, in my early plays of Inkle and Yarico and the Battle of Hexham. Liston is exquisite in his line, Edwin was equally so; the rich humour of these two eminent artists is distinct: that of the departed comedian was peculiar to himself, and, as the living actor now singeth, *vice varsy;* but I know not how I can better express my opinion of both, than by stating that I admire Liston now, as I admired Edwin formerly, and that when Edwin was, and Liston is, in his element, I have no conception of a greater comic treat than the performance of either.

" Miss Farren,* then in her teens, made her

* A leading journal of the day thus speaks of Miss Farren, the Spanish Barber, and Garrick's Epilogue to it:—" The genteel figure of Miss Farren captivated the Haymarket audience on her first appearance, and inclined them to receive her efforts with candour and applause. The promising prospect of her standing forward in the first line of comic actresses, which her performances exhibited, not only ratified the first opinion the public

début, June 9, as Miss Hardcastle, in Goldsmith's comedy of 'She stoops to conquer.' She conquered so much subsequently, in the superior walk of comedy, that she might have stooped in resuming this character, although it is worthy the acceptance of an actress of great ability: she came most opportunely to prevent a chasm, which would have been greatly lamented, and to personate modern females of fashion, when the retirement of the Abington, with the *vieille cour* was approaching. To dilate upon the history of the lovely and accomplished Miss Farren would be very superfluous; no person ever more successfully performed the elegant levities of Lady Townly upon the stage, or more happily practised the amiable virtues of Lady Grace in the highest circles of society.

"Foote was weak enough to betray his soreness at my father's prosperous proceeding: he could not bear to see anybody or anything succeed in the Haymarket but himself and his own writings, and forgot that a failure of the new scheme might possibly endanger the regular payment of his annuity. His pique broke out sometimes in downright

had formed, but incited them to cherish, with more than common applause, a female so perfect in point of figure and so near maturity in professional ability. What was the consequence? Mr. Colman, who may surely be deemed a tolerable judge of rising merit, gave Miss Farren the principal character in his comedy of the Spanish Barber, and persuaded his friend, Garrick, to trust her with the Epilogue; a mark of confidence which men conversant in theatrical affairs know to be of material import. Miss Farren has not only acquitted herself creditably in the comedy, but gained applause from the most rigid critics, by her admirable mode of delivering the Epilogue. A good proof this, that public encouragement ought ever to wait upon growing ability.

rudeness. One morning he came hopping upon the stage during the rehearsal of the Spanish Barber, then about to be produced; the performers were busy in that scene of the piece when one servant is under the influence of a sleeping draught, and another of a sneezing powder. 'Well,' said Foote drily to my father, 'How do you go on?' 'Pretty well,' was the answer, 'but I cannot teach one of these fellows to gape as he ought to do.' 'Can't you?' replied Foote, 'then read him your last Comedy of the 'Man of Business,' and he'll yawn for a month.' On another occasion he was not less coarse, though more laughable to an actor, than he had been to the manager. This happened when Digges, of much celebrity out of London, and who had come to town from Edinburgh, covered with Scottish laurels, made his first appearance in the Haymarket. He had studied the antiquated style of acting, in short he was a fine bit of old stage-buckram, and Cato was therefore selected for his first essay. He 'discharged the character,' in the same costume as it is to be supposed was adopted by Booth, when the play was originally acted, that is in a shape, as it was technically termed, of the stiffest order, decorated with gilt leather upon a black ground, with black stockings, black gloves, and a powdered periwig.*

* Davies, in his Dramatic Miscellanies, 1784, says, "The heads of the English actors were, for a long time, covered with large full bottomed periwigs. Until within these last twenty-five years, our Tamerlanes and Catos had as much hair on their heads as our Judges on the Bench. Booth was a classical scholar, and well acquainted with the polite arts; he was conversant with the remains of antiquity, with busts and coins, nor

"Foote had planted himself in the pit, when Digges stalked on before the public thus formidably accoutred. The malicious wag waited till the customary round of applause had subsided, and then ejaculated, in a pretended under-tone, loud enough to be heard by all around him, 'A Roman chimney-sweeper on May-day!' The laughter which this produced in the pit was enough to knock up a *débutant*, and it startled the old stager personating the stoic of Utica; the sarcasm was irresistibly funny, but Foote deserved to be kicked out of the house for his cruelty, and his insolence in mingling with the audience, for the purpose of disconcerting a brother actor.

"Digges had too much intrinsic merit, notwithstanding all his old fashioned mannerism, to be put down by Foote's satire. His Cato, or rather Addison's Cato, as Johnson characterised him, was too dull for frequent repetition, but Digges played it a second time,* and his Wolsey was greatly approved. Here, 'his gesture and eloquence' assisted him in delineating the 'high-blown pride' of the Churchman: and, in the scene of the Cardinal's fall,

could he approve such a violation of propriety, but his indolence got the better of his good taste, and he became a conformist to a custom which he despised. I have been told, that he and Wilks bestowed forty guineas each on the exorbitant thatching of their heads."

* Digges' real name was West. He was born in 1720, and was supposed to be the natural son of a nobleman. He quitted the army in 1749 for the stage, and made his first appearance in London, August 14, 1777, in the character of Cato. He personated Cardinal Wolsey twice, and Sir John Brute twice. This last he repeated for a benefit, on September 18, after the regular season had closed. He died at Cork, November 10, 1786.

he drew tears, the genuine tributes of approbation, even from the eyes of flinty-hearted critics.

" In the next season, his performance of Caratach in the revived and altered play of Bonduca was an excellent piece of acting. His style and age, however, which confined him to a narrow range of characters, forbade his making anything like such an impression as was produced by the three performers previously mentioned, but he was invited, like them, to the honours of an engagement in the Winter Theatres.

" After Digges, all the other new comers except Blissett and Mrs. Massey can only be considered as different shades of the middling and underling: they must be classed under one general term, like Æneas's common-place companions, '*fortemque Gyan, fortemque Cloanthum,*' and were, in newspaper language, ' respectable.' Mrs. Massey was a somewhat squeezy lady, with features not much more attractive than her figure was majestic, but she evinced sound judgment, and a good deal of energy in some grave and tragic characters. Blissett, a great favourite for many years at Bath, made a good hit as Basil, in the then new comedy of the Spanish Barber, ' *O, si sic omnia !*' he was ineffective in every thing else, although he tried both comedy and tragedy, but the less of tragedy, in the Haymarket, at least with the company of which I am now speaking, the better.

" Monsieur Georgi's infantile pupils, as dancers, were a complete burlesque upon a *corps de ballet.* The audience laughed, and tolerated the poor little things, when they were pushed on between the

acts to caper and lose their shoes, while Monsieur Georgi was *peste*-ing, and *sacre-dieu*-ing at them, by the side of the scenes. There were two or three hobbedy-hoys among them, but some were so young, that keeping them up late at night to the injury of their health, seemed as if the cruel manager had resolved to try a new method of murdering the innocents.

"To have done with the Haymarket theatre, at least for the present, the experimental season proved successful, and lucrative, beyond the most sanguine hope, and the new monarch with his new *régime* was thoroughly established."

The School for Scandal was produced at Drury Lane this year (May 8, 1777), with such known and well merited success, that a remark on it would be superfluous. Garrick furnished the Prologue, and Colman the Epilogue to it; this latter we subjoin.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. Abington, *in the character of Lady Teazle.*

"I, who was late so volatile and gay,
Like a trade-wind must now blow all one way,
Bend all my cares, my studies, and my vows,
To one old rusty weathercock—my spouse;
So wills our virtuous Bard! the pye-ball'd Bayes
Of crying Epilogues and laughing plays.
"Old bachelors, who marry smart young wives,
Learn from our play to regulate your lives!
Each bring his dear to town—all faults upon her—
London will prove the very source of honour;
Plung'd fairly in, like a cold bath, it serves,
When principles relax—to brace the nerves.
Such is my case—and yet I must deplore
That the gay dream of dissipation 's o'er;
And say, ye fair, was ever lively wife,
Born with a genius for the highest life,

Like me, untimely blasted in her bloom,
Like me, condemn'd to such a dismal doom ?
Save money—when I just knew how to *waste* it !
Leave London—just as I began to taste it !
Must I then watch the early-crowing cock ?
The melancholy ticking of a clock ?
In the lone rustic hall for ever pounded,
With dogs, cats, rats, and squalling brats surrounded ?
With humble curates can I now retire,
(While good Sir Peter boozes with the 'Squire)
And at backgammon mortify my soul,
That pants for *loo*, or flutters at a *vole ?*
Seven's the main !—dear sound !—that must expire,
Lost at *hot-cockles* round a Christmas fire !
The transient hour of fashion too soon spent,
" Farewell the tranquil mind, farewell content !
" Farewell the *plumed* head—the cushioned *tête*,
" That takes the cushion from its proper seat !
" The spirit-stirring drum !—*card drums* I mean—
" *Spadille ! Odd trick ! Pam ! Basto ! King !* and *Queen !*
" And you, ye *knockers*, that with brazen throat
" The welcome visitors' approach denote,
" Farewell !—all *Quality* of high renown,
" Pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious town.
" Farewell ! your revels I partake no more,
" And Lady *Teazle's* occupation 's o'er."
All this I told our Bard—he smil'd, and said 'twas clear
I ought to play deep tragedy next year :
Meanwhile he drew wise morals from his play,
And in these solemn periods stalk'd away.
" Blest were the fair, like you, her faults who stopp'd !
" And clos'd her follies when the curtain dropp'd !
" No more in vice or error to engage,
" Or play the fool at large on Life's great Stage !"

Henderson made his first appearance at Drury-Lane in Hamlet, with alterations, Sept. 30, 1777, Ophelia, by Mrs. Robinson. When Henderson came to London in June, to perform during the summe. at Mr. Colman's theatre, he was engaged under a penalty of 300 guineas to act during the ensuing

season at Bath. Sheridan, however agreed to pay him a handsome salary to play at Drury Lane, during the winter; and Mr. Palmer, the Bath Manager, consented to this arrangement.

On the 4th of February, 1778, Mr. Colman moved the Court of Chancery on a bill and affidavit, in which he stated, that he had purchased the copyright of the comedy of The Cozeners, the comedy of the Maid of Bath, the comedy of The Devil upon Two Sticks, and of other pieces as yet unpublished of the late Mr. Foote, for a considerable sum of money; and therefore prayed the Court to grant an injunction against a bookseller to prevent his further sale of these comedies, two of which he had published, and the third he had advertised for publication. The Court immediately granted the injunction. It was stated that if the above property of Mr. Colman could be invaded without redress, the proprietors of the comic opera of The Duenna, and the comedies called The School for Scandal, and Know Your Own Mind, were liable to a similar injury, as their right stood exactly on the same ground with that of Mr. Colman.

We will resume George Colman's (the younger) description of the Haymarket Theatre, this year:

"Previously to the second season of 1778, the interior improvements of the house were effected. It was new roofed, the ceiling heightened, the slips or sidelong appendages, in the olden times, to the upper gallery, were turned into a third tier of front boxes; and an approach of a few feet wide and fewer deep, dignified by the name of a lobby,

was made to the boxes; whereas, in Foote's days, there was scarcely any space at all between them and the street; so that the attention of the audience, in this part of the theatre was frequently distracted by post-horns, and the out-of-doors cry of 'extraordinary news from France,' while the modern Aristophanes, upon the stage, was threatening French invaders with 'peppering their flat-bottomed boats,' in the character of Major Sturgeon.

"The former ugly facings of the boxes and galleries were entirely changed, and now consisted partly of gold balustrades, partly of gold mouldings, upon a white ground; the whole had a light pleasing effect, and preserved the *simplex munditiis*, notwithstanding its gilding and its gaiety. My father talked hugely of the money which all this, particularly the roof, had cost him; but he had succeeded to a profitable playhouse, at a remarkably cheap rate, and owed this expense to the public.

"After all, the plan of this little theatre was at best miserably 'cabined, cribbed, and confined.' The avenues to all the side-boxes were so incurably narrow that, when two corpulent gentlemen met in them, and endeavoured to squeeze past each other, there was great danger of their sticking by the way. I often thought, during my own possession of this diminutive theatre, it would be better to furnish my side-box customers with a bell, to tie round their necks, at the pay-door of the house, upon the same principle as that of providing waggon-horses with such tinkling apparatus, to give notice of their approach, and prevent confusion and jostling in cross

lanes, or defiles of the highway: but, however the audience in this little theatre, which is now levelled with the dust, might be cramped for room and accommodation, they certainly could hear and see the performers upon its stage better than upon those covered Salisbury Plains which now characterize the two grand winter houses."

The season commenced May 18, with a comedy in three acts, entitled 'The Female Chevalier,' altered from Taverner. The prologue on opening the house, written by Colman, was spoken by John Palmer, with some additional lines on the death of Foote. The manager of the Haymarket was remarkably active in catering for the public, for besides other novelties, he produced his comedy, 'The Suicide,' in four acts. On this arrangement, a critic of the day thus remarks:—'It may probably serve as a precedent for revising and curtailing many of the stock comedies of the theatres, from which one act at least might very well be spared, the progress of the machine being tediously interrupted by insipid dialogue.' Garrick furnished the Epilogue; but this comedy did not give general satisfaction. The late Mrs. Hannah More, in a letter to Garrick, September 22, 1778, thus writes:—'I hear a sad character of our little friend's comedy. Lord Shelburne, Lady Cork, and Mrs. Poyntz, told me the other day, that it was a wretched thing, and dishonoured him both as an author and a man. This paper would not hold all the severe things thus said of it, especially Mrs. Poyntz, who spoke of it with an aversion that almost approached to abhorrence, as she said the

most intimate family secrets were exposed and ridiculed.'

On July 20, a laughable accident took place at the Haymarket Theatre. The ladies at that time wore very large hats, some idea of which may be formed by a reference to many of Rowlandson's caricatures, in his figures at races, watering places, &c. The head-dress of a celebrated lady, who sat in one of the green boxes, touched one of the side lights, and caught fire. The flame instantly communicated to the hat of a lady who was seated next to her, and the house was in a roar of laughter for some minutes. It is impossible to say where the conflagration might have ended, had not a gentleman, who seemed to be much interested in the fate of the ladies, with great dexterity extinguished the flames.

On July 30, Colman revived the tragedy of 'Bonduca,' altered from Beaumont and Fletcher, and it was very favourably received.

The first alteration of this play was made in 1696, by an unknown editor. In the following year another change was made in it by Charles Hopkins, when it was performed at the Theatre Royal in Lincoln's Inn. Mr. Glover, the author of 'Leonidas,' produced a new tragedy on the same story in 1753, and, following modern historians, gave the name of Boadicea to his heroine, instead of Bonduca. Finally, Mr. Colman made different alterations of the first piece, produced in 1647 by Beaumont and Fletcher. The subject was judiciously chosen and well-timed, and being introduced to favour by an excellent Prologue, had a run.

The following note from Horace Walpole, was addressed to Colman, on the subject of a farce which he had placed in his hands. It exhibits much modesty, but stage fright is indeed an appalling thing; and there has not yet been a dramatic writer, let him boast as he will, who has not severely suffered by it.

"The author of 'Nature will prevail,' is extremely obliged to Mr. Colman for his civility, and sorry he cannot have the courage to be known for an author. He does not mean to give Mr. Colman the trouble of correcting his farce, but, as he is very sensible of the little merit there is in it, Mr. Colman is perfectly at liberty to make any alteration in it he pleases, as he must be a much better judge of what is proper for the stage than the writer can be. If Mr. Colman has any thing else he wishes to say, the bearer will attend him at any time he shall appoint, to receive a note with his commands."*

On August 3rd, a comic opera, in two acts, called 'The Gipsies,' was brought out; but after five representations the Gipsies were compelled to decamp; and on the 17th of the same month another new comic opera, called 'The Flitch of Bacon,' founded on the well-known custom of the Manor of Dunmow, was brought out, and continued to be the favourite. The music, fable, and dialogue were equally admired.

The season of 1778 was successful, and Colman

* Horace Walpole did not at this time avow himself as the author of the dramatic proverb called 'Nature will Prevail,' played at the Haymarket, in 1778. It was printed in his works, 1798, 4to. vol. ii.

gained another step towards his permanent establishment in the Haymarket.

"During the dog-days the Haymarket Muses," says George Colman the younger, "had not a little unsettled my reason; hopes were entertained of my recovery in the autumn, when lo! an accident in December quite unhinged me again, and brought on a relapse of stage mania stronger than ever. This fortuitous occurrence was the going with my father into Wales to pass the Christmas holidays with the late Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, who gave at this time of the year, and for some years in sequence, Private Theatricals in Denbighshire.

"In the cast-book so kindly lent to me by Mr. Charles Wynn, it appears that the Wynnstay theatricals were continued annually for nearly forty years, from 1770 to 1808, inclusive; but in the latter years the performances were of a more private nature, the spectators being confined to the party in the house. On one particular occasion, a piece was acted out of the usual season, and underwent a most formidable ordeal; for the document runs thus: 'Chrononhotonthologos, performed October 2, 1777. Mr. Garrick was present.'

"This was a year and not quite four months previous to Garrick's death. For raw undisciplined actors to stand the scrutiny of the tremendous 'Roscius,' it required a more than ordinary effort of nerves; they were judicious, therefore, in selecting a piece of such broad burlesque as puts the exercise of keen judgment and rigorous criticism, upon the merits of performers, out of the question.

"Dramatically imbued as I had just been, nothing could better suit my young propensities; and never were parties more festive, nor arrangements better made for the perfect ease and comfort of a house full of guests, than at Wynnstay, the family mansion of the much-esteemed and hospitable Baronet. The *company* here when *off* the stage was superior to any regulars *on* it, but I much doubt whether my father, or any London manager, would have offered the best actor among them a good salary. The party upon these occasions staid about three weeks, began to muster strong about eight or ten days previously to the performance, acted through the holiday week, and separated a few days afterwards. At the fullest time of our season, we generally sat down to dinner from twenty-five to thirty in number upon an average, the family and guests, partly visiting actors, partly audience, included.

"Previously to the regular performances in each season, we had two dressed representations of them, which might be called public rehearsals, to edify and astound the inferior natives, the farmers and tradesmen. These joyous, unsophisticated folks, with their wives and daughters, were in comparison with our more refined visitors, as the London galleries are to the dressed boxes, much the most cheering audiences to the actors. Their applause, it must be owned, was too injudicious to be very flattering; and their expressions of delight were sometimes directly the reverse of that which might be wished: as in the instance of King Richard the Third's dying speech, after his desperate struggle with Richmond,

at which they laughed *à gorge déployée!* We certainly were very attractive, for the good Cambro-Britons, of the first families, flocked from distant domains to see us, some came from thirty miles off, and carriages were in such requisition at the inns, that on one night there were two mourning coaches waiting in the park, which had each brought a merry party of six insides.

" The theatre at Wynnstay has in its time been destined to provide food both for the body and the mind; it was originally a kitchen, built on the occasion of its late possessor's coming of age, which event was celebrated with all observance of eating and drinking, to be expected on the twenty-first anniversary of the birth of a Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, whom his attached Cambro-British tenants were wont to mention, without meaning, honest souls! to say anything profane, as the deity of North Wales. This building, although intended to be temporary, was I know not how many years old when I saw it, and is still I believe extant. It afforded no capabilities, except space, for altering it from a kitchen into a theatre; the alteration, however, was made with good taste: it presented a plain simple interior, with no work in it, as there was in its pristine state, for the carver; and, as it could not boast altitude proportional with its breadth, and horizontal length, the audience part had neither boxes nor galleries, but consisted merely of a commodious pit. This construction had one advantage which cannot, I presume, be obtained in any of our

large public playhouses, namely : there was no row of flaring lamps, technically called the float, immediately before the performers' feet, in front of the proscenium, but this same float was affixed to a large beam, formed into an arch, over their heads, on that side of the arch nearest to the stage; so that the audience did not see the lamps, which cast a strong vertical light upon the actors. This is as we receive light from nature, whereas the operation of the float is exactly upon a reversed principle, and throws all the shades of the actor's countenance the wrong way : a fault which seems to be irremediable; for, if a beam to hold lamps, as at Wynnstay, were placed over the proscenium of Drury Lane, or Covent Garden theatre, the Marybone goddesses in the upper tiers of boxes, and the two and one shilling gods in the galleries, would be completely intercepted from a view of the stage. But, however incurable this defect may appear, it is possible, that, in this age of improvement, some ingenious architect, while theatres are springing up like mushrooms, may hit upon a remedy ; at all events, it is a grand desideratum.

" My father's habits of the shop broke out naturally enough at the first rehearsal; he sat tolerably tranquil for some time, observing the awkwardness of the amateurs, and their ignorance in the commonest arrangements of the stage: they either crossed behind each other's backs, or ran against one another, in the attempt to change sides; at length the under-butler, who, in the dearth of numbers

was made a minor actor, in attempting to deliver a sword to the person he was addressing, did it so very clumsily, that the Haymarket manager could bear it no longer: jumping upon the stage, and snatching the sword out of the man's hand, he cried 'Zounds, sir, can't you do it thus?' showing him the proper way, but the under-butler was dull, and begged for further directions how to give it. 'How?' said my father, 'why as you gave a gravy-spoon to Sir Watkin yesterday at dinner; you did that graceful enough: I observed you.' After this, the ice was broken, the gentlemen actors saw that they might profit as much as the under-butler, by my father's stage knowledge, and from that moment he became stage-manager, and driller of the whole company. As to the distribution of parts, he was wont to express his sentiments to Sir Watkin upon this head in the following liberal manner: 'Amateurs, my dear Sir Watkin, should not be jealous about showing off in the best characters, like regular actors. Now, if we get up Richard the Third, or the Merchant of Venice, which you have talked of, I shall have no objection to taking Richard in the one, or Shylock in the other, anything to accommodate. In fact, he was vastly superior to the whole corps.

"My father shone among the amateurs *velut inter ignes Luna minores*, which might naturally have been expected from an experienced dramatist, Garrick's intimate, his colleague in writing The Clandestine Marriage, and an able manager, long practised in drilling his performers at rehearsals, and reading plays to them in the Green-room.

" Sir Watkin was, after my father, the best actor in the company, and played Tom Errand, I remember, with much drollery. The character of Host of Wynnstay he performed the whole time we were there to the utmost perfection; and the hostess was as admirably represented by the now Dowager Lady Williams Wynne.

" I went annually to Wynnstay for three seasons, beginning as a promising actor, and having greatly risen in my cast of parts, after the first year.

" Whether in my own attempts at acting I proved myself, as my father afterwards called me in his prologue to my first play, 'a chip of the old block,' I am not competent to determine; he now and then commended me; but this, in all likelihood, proceeded either from parental partiality or his habitual encouragement to a theatrical novice.

" As I am writing particulars which refer so much to myself, some curious trifler may possibly wish to ask me the same question which Hamlet puts to Polonius, 'what did you enact?' I therefore give a list of the characters; but I am not 'so capital a calf as to say, like King Claudius's Lord Chamberlain, that I was 'accounted a good actor.'

" In my first season, being then upon my probation, and not long turned of sixteen, my beginnings were humble, as Ginks in The Royal Merchant;* Paris, Mr. Oakly's French *valet-de-chambre*, in The Jealous Wife, and Biondello, in Katharine and

* An alteration by H. N. (probably Henry Norris, the comedian), from Beaumont and Fletcher's Beggar's Bush, and in this altered shape has been frequently performed.

Petruchio. In the two subsequent seasons I was advanced to the following parts:—Guiderius, in Cymbeline; Tressel, in King Richard the Third; Lazarillo, in The Spanish Barber; Old Woman, in Rule a Wife and Have a Wife; Young Wilding, in The Liar; Lord Minikin, in Bon Ton; Young Cape, in The Author; Young Clincher, in The Constant Couple.

"My transition in January 1779 from the festivities of Wales to the austerities of a College, was more violent than agreeable. My father on his way to town dropped me at Oxford, leaving me there, after having seen me matriculated.

"On my entrance as a member of Christ Church, I was too foppish a follower of the prevailing fashions to be a reverential observer of academical dress: the hand of time was forestalled by the fingers of the barber, and an English stripling with his hair flowing over his shoulders was, in the course of half-an-hour metamorphosed into a man, by means of powder, pomatum, the comb, the curling-irons, and a bit of black ribbon to make a pig-tail, in truth I was an egregious little puppy, and I was presented to the Vice-Chancellor to be matriculated in a grass-green coat with the furiously be-powdered pate of an ultra-coxcomb, both of which are proscribed by the statutes of the University.

"Much courtesy is shown, in the ceremony of matriculation, to the boys who come from Eton and Westminster; insomuch that they are never examined in respect to their knowledge of the school classics; their competency is considered as a

matter of course; but, in subscribing the articles of their matriculation oaths, they sign their *prænomen* in Latin; I wrote, therefore, *Georgeius*, thus, alas! inserting a redundant *e*, and, after a pause, said inquiringly to the Vice-Chancellor, looking up in his face with perfect *naïveté*, pray, sir, am I to add '*Colmanus?*' My Terentian father, who stood at my right elbow, blushed at my ignorance; the tutor, a piece of sham marble, did not blush at all, but gave a sardonic grin, as if scagliola had moved a muscle! The good-natured Vice* drollingly answered me, that 'the surnames of certain profound authors, whose comparatively modern works were extant, had been latinized; but that a Roman termination tacked to the patronymic of an English gentleman of my age and appearance, would rather be a redundant formality.'

"There was too much delicacy in the worthy doctor's satire for my green comprehension, and I walked back, unconscious of it, to my college, strutting along in the pride of my unstatutable curls and green coat, and practically breaking my oath, the moment after I had taken it.

"A freshman, as a young academician is called, on his admission at Oxford, is a forlorn animal. It is awkward for an old stager in life to be thrown into a large company of strangers, to make his way among them, as he can; but to the poor freshman every thing is strange, not only college society, but

* The Vice-Chancellor, I think, Dr. Horne, was at this time President of Magdalen College.

any society at all, and he is solitary in the midst of a crowd.

" If indeed he should happen to come to the University, particularly to Christ-Church, from one of the great public schools, he finds some of his late school-fellows; who, being in the same straggling situation with himself, abridge the period of his fire-side loneliness, and of their own, by forming a familiar intercourse: otherwise he may mope for many a week; at all events, it is generally some time before he establishes himself in a set of acquaintance.

" An outline of my own grievances, on my *début* as a commoner at Christ-Church, may serve to describe the state of almost all the new comers. The college was then full if not overflowing, and afforded me a very remote prospect of sitting down in regular apartments of my own; in the mean time, my tutor stowed me in the rooms of one of his absent pupils, which were so much superior to those of most other under-graduates, that I did not at all relish the probability of being turned out of them, as soon as the owner arrived, and he was daily expected. Even this precarious tenure was envied me by several of my contemporaries; for the college was so completely crammed, that shelving garrets, and even unwholesome cellars were inhabited by young gentlemen, of whose families the servants could not be less liberally accommodated.

" The retainers in my establishment at Oxford were a scout and a bedmaker; so that, including myself, I might have said with Gibbet, ' my company is but small, we are but three.' There was

this difference, indeed, between Captain Gibbet* and myself, he insisted on dividing booty with his gang, but I submitted to be robbed by my adherents.

" The bedmaker whom I originally employed was rather more rapacious than her sister harpies; for, before she commenced the usual depredations upon me, she had the ingenuity to ' rob me of that which did not enrich her,' and made me very uncomfortable indeed! The article of which she contrived to despoil me was neither more nor less than a night's sleep: this aforesaid theft was committed, as the deponent hereby setteth forth, in manner and form following:

" My spirits had been flurried during the day, from the revolution in my state, launched from the school-dock into the wide ocean of a university; matriculated by the Vice-Chancellor in the morning; left by my father at noon; dining in the hall at three o'clock, unknowing and almost unknown; informed that I must be in the chapel next day soon after sun-rise; elated with my growing dignity; depressed by boyish *mauvaise honte* among the *sophs*; dreading college discipline; forestalling college jollity: ye gods! what a conflict of passions does all this create in a booby boy!

" I was glad, on retiring early to rest, that I might ruminate for five minutes over the important events of the day, before I fell fast asleep.

" I was not, then, in the habit of using a night-lamp, or burning a rush-light, so, having dropped

* See Farquhar's ' Beaux Stratagem.'

the extinguisher upon my candle, I got into bed, and found, to my dismay, that I was reclining in the dark, upon a surface very like that of a pond in a hard frost. The jade of a bedmaker had spread the spick and span new sheeting over the blankets, fresh from the linendraper's shop, unwashed, unironed, and unaired, 'with all its imperfections on its head.'

"Through the tedious hours of an inclement January night, I could not close my eyes, my teeth chattered, my back shivered, I thrust my head under the bolster, drew up my knees to my chin, it was all useless, I could not get warm. I turned again and again, at every turn a hand or a foot touched upon some new cold place, and at every turn the chill glazy clothwork crepitated like iced buckram. God forgive me, for having execrated the authoress of my calamity! but, I verily think, that the meekest of Christians who prays for his enemies, and for mercy upon all 'Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics,' would in his orisons, in such a night of misery, make a specific exception against his bedmaker.

"I rose betimes, languid and feverish, hoping that the customary morning ablutions would somewhat refresh me, but, on taking up a towel, I might have exclaimed with Hamlet, 'Ay, there's the rub!' It was just in the same stubborn state as the linen of the bed, and as uncompromising a piece of huckaback, of a yard long, and three quarters wide, I give the usual dimensions, as ever presented its superficies to the skin of a gentleman. Having washed and scrubbed myself in the bed-chamber, till I was flayed with the friction, I proceeded to my sitting-

room, where I found a blazing fire, and a breakfast very neatly laid out, but again I encountered the same rigour! The tea equipage was placed upon a substance which was snow-white, but unyielding as a skin of new parchment from the law-stationer; it was the eternal unwashed linen! and I dreaded to sit down to hot rolls and butter, lest I should cut my shins against the edge of the table-cloth.

"In short, I found upon inquiry that I was only undergoing the common lot, the usual seasoning, of almost every freshman whose fate it is to crackle through the first ten days or fortnight of his residence in college: but the most formidable piece of drapery belonging to him is his new surplice, in which he attends chapel on certain days of the week: it covers him from his chin to his feet, and seems to stand on end, in emulation of a full suit of armour. Cased in this linen panoply, the certain betrayer of an academical *débutant*, the newer-comer is to be heard at several yards distance, on his way across a quadrangle, crackling and bouncing like a dry faggot upon the fire, and never fails to command notice in his repeated marches to prayer, till soap and water have silenced the noise of his arrival at Oxford.

"The principal calamity, however, of the freshman, by which, as I shall presently show, he smarts in purse and suffers in person, arises from his ignorance in œconomics; from his utter helplessness in providing himself with the common articles of consumption and comfort, requisite for the occupancy of a lodging.

"My two mercenaries, having to do with a per-

fect greenhorn, laid in all the articles for me which I wanted, wine, tea, sugar, coals, candles, bed and table-linen, with many useless *et cætera*, which they told me I wanted; charging me for every thing full half more than they had paid, and then purloining from me full half of what they had sold. Each of these worthy characters, who were upon a regular salary, introduced an assistant, the first his wife, the second her husband, upon no salary at all, the auxiliaries demanding no further emolument than that which arose from their being the conjugal helpmates of the stipendiary despoilers.

"Hence I soon discovered the policy of always employing a married scout and bedmaker, who are married to each other; for, since almost all the college menials are yoked in matrimony, this rule consolidates knavery, and reduces your ménage to a couple of pilferers instead of four.

"Your scout, it must be owned, is not an animal remarkable for sloth, and, when he considers the quantity of work he has to slur over, with small pay, among his multitude of masters, it serves perhaps as a salve to his conscience for his petty larcenies. He undergoes the double toil of boots at a well-frequented inn, and a waiter at Vauxhall, in a successful season. After coat-brushing, shoe-cleaning, and message-running, in the morning, he has upon an average half a dozen supper-parties to attend, in the same night and at the same hour, shifting a plate here, drawing a cork there, running to and fro, from one set of chambers to another, and almost solving the Irishman's question of 'how can I be in two places at once, unless I was a bird?'

"A good and really honest drudge of this description is a phenomenon at Christ Church, and even then his services are scarcely worth the purchase, he is so split into shares, that each of his numerous employers obtains in him something like the sixteenth of a twenty-pound prize in a lottery.

"In those my days of academical precocity, a brother collegian of my own non-age, with whom I was very intimate, and who is now a dignitary of the Church, frisked up to London, while I remained at Oxford. During his short stay in town, he made the young Oxonian's usual discovery of a vacuum in his pocket; and his reflections upon it were not at all in unison with that contempt for riches manifested by Diogenes in his tub; looking at the question algebraically, he was decidedly of opinion that converting the *minus* of his finances into *plus*, would be vastly agreeable. It occurred to him, therefore, that being of an excellent family, though a younger brother, he might raise a good round sum at once for his present and future *menus plaisirs;* and there were then in London, as there always will be, plenty of depredators, who profess to furnish pecuniary accommodation, not merely for gentlemen come of age, but even for infants of good expectancy.

"One morning I received a letter from him: he in London, and I at College, enclosing his draughts upon me for five hundred pounds, which he desired me to accept, as a matter of course, that he might complete a loan: in the flush of youthful friendship, and ignorance of worldly business and cares, I subscribed the bills without hesitation, and sent them back by return of post.

"A few days afterwards he sent me a second letter, containing further bills to the same amount for my acceptance, stating that there was some informality in the first draughts, which were therefore useless. I accepted *de novo;* thus the notes for five hundred were *encored* to the tune of a thousand!

"The reader need not be told that my friend, who was as unpractised in the world as myself, had fallen into the clutches of one of those low advertising scoundrels who call themselves money-scriveners, with whom the town swarms. All the money advanced was a hundred, or a hundred and fifty pounds; the first bills were not returned when the second were given; all of them were put into circulation, and brought against us, according to their dates, as they became due.

"Here was the devil to pay, or rather the bill-holders, confederates most likely with the original rascal, were to be paid or not paid, as it might happen. The young pigeons had no assets; the rooks therefore attacked the parent nests; in other words, they attempted to bully our relations.

"My father, on being apprized of what had occurred, was outrageous against me; he forgot every line in his elegant version of parental lenity towards youthful delinquents;* far from being intimidated by

* 'Tis this, then, is the duty of a father;
To make a son embrace a life of virtue
Rather from choice than terror or constraint.
Here lies the mighty difference between
A Father and a Master. He who knows not
How to do this, let him confess he knows not
How to rule children.'

Colman's Translation of The Adelphi of Terence, Act I. Sc. 1.

the claimants, he swore, that instead of paying them a shilling he would make a Bow-street business of it, and take them all up for a parcel of swindlers; in respect to non-payment, he most religiously kept his oath.

"I do not exactly remember how the affair was settled, but it appeared, upon investigation, that I had never received, or expected to receive, any money upon the bills; my seeming prodigality, therefore, dwindled into the old story, the imprudence of becoming 'bound for a friend.' My father, in consequence, as one of the consulting family elders who met upon the occasion, declared himself *hors de combat*; and I believe that my friend's mother, who was a widow, and his near relative Sir * * * *, compromised the matter at some expense; which upon principles of public justice should perhaps have been resisted, particularly as there was every reason to suspect that the bill-holders were not *bonâ fide* creditors. But let me apostrophize my quondam associate, who was engaged with me in this transaction:

"Dear and worthy Doctor! my condiscipulus of Westminster, and chief companion at Christ Church, who in our spring of life didst nourish with me those blossoms of regard which were blighted by vernal accidents, and have never come to fruit. Bosom friend of my immaturity! refuter among thousands, of that fallacy which perceives a freehold in the frail tenure of school and college connexions, how many terms and long vacations have flitted over our heads since last we parted! those heads which, while thou didst speculate upon borrowed

gold, little recked how time, in his stealing course, might silver them! But shouldest thou bestow a glance upon these rambling pages, and I think it probable that thou mayest, first, because their publication may excite thy curiosity in respect to the records of thy early friend; secondly, which perhaps should be first, because thou mayest expect to find therein some mention of thyself, no matter for the motive; but should these crudities fall in thy way, they will cause thee to ruminate awhile perhaps, and to philosophize upon this wild transaction of our 'salad days, when we were green in judgment.'* They may bring back to thy mind's eye the eight-feet square study, thy *sanctum sanctorum*, in Peckwater Quadrangle, whither we were wont to retire, after our 3 o'clock dinner in the Hall; and there, over a bottle of fiery Oxford port, worthless and pernicious, dear Doctor, as the draughts which I had accepted for thee, compose letters to our angry relatives, palliating, as ably as we could, the follies which had brought us into such a scrape. Thou mayest recollect, too, I can, if thou canst not, thy ingenuous impulses of youthful honour, which made thee so anxious to take the whole blame upon thyself, and to clear me from the supposition of being an intended participator in the loan, calling thyself the only responsible man, at which my father, to whom thy letter was addressed, would frequently laugh outright after his wrath against me had subsided, for much indeed did he chuckle at thy manly tone, and the ripe responsibility of thy pubescence.

* Antony and Cleopatra, Act I., Scene 5.

"Several of the offspring with which Christ Church teemed, at the period I am recording, were destined to become eminent men. Of embryo statesmen, there were the Marquess of Wellesley, Earl Bathurst, and the late Lord Grenville, the last of whom became Chancellor of the University. There was also the late Lord Colchester, Keeper of the Privy Seal in Ireland, who was speaker of the House of Commons. Appended to these, as if by a foretaste of his attendance on the Lords, was the much respected Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt; whose gentle and unassuming manners, in his conspicuous office of Usher of the Black Rod, so well accorded with the personal modesty of his perpendicular elevation above any surface parallel with the horizon.

"There was, moroever, the late Samuel Whitbread: this honourable gentleman was not of the first-rate abilities, yet, after certain Whigs far superior to him in talent had dropped off, he did not rank meanly as a wrangler in the Lower House. One of his speeches at least has been immortalized, by a parody attributed to the Muse of Canning; and most of my readers must remember the lines in which the rhetorical brewer, like another pious Æneas, holds forth over the ashes of his defunct father. I need not quote the entire passage:*

"While summing up my statement, I forgot to notice a declamatory practice of Lord Wellesley. His Lordship occupied apartments in the old Quad-

* 'That day, too, he died, having finished his summing,
And the Angels cried out, here's old Whitbread a-coming;
So that day I hail, with a smile and a sigh,
For his beer with an *E*, and his bier with an *I*.'

rangle, adjacent to mine ; being on the same tier of building, although belonging to a separate staircase. Instead of a party-wall, there seemed to be no intervening materials but canvas, lath, plaster, and the modern papering of our ancient rooms ; so that

' thin partitions did our bounds divide.'

In consequence of so slender a barrier, I could not avoid hearing his Lordship at times reciting, or reading aloud, what I conjectured to be the orations of Demosthenes and Tully ; these were, I presume, self-imposed exercises of a political tyro, training himself for public speaking, and ambitious of the eloquence which he has, since, so happily acquired ; but the medium, slight as it was, through which the tones were to penetrate, was sufficient to prevent me from distinguishing inflections of the voice, or, indeed, much of its articulation ; it was almost *vox et præterea nihil ;* and verily, under such obstructing circumstances, his Lordship's utterance did appear to me to be characterised by a most wearing and dismal uniformity of sound ! calculated either to irritate the nerves of a next neighbour, or to lull him to sleep.

" This casual monotony of an unfledged Minister was, however, frequently broken by the running of the rats ; who had established a strong opposition against the noble Lord, and there was no calling them to order. Frequently in the midst of his harangue, one of the heaviest trotters of the party would take a sudden frisk, and run squeaking and skirring along behind the lath and plaster, from one corner of the room to the other ; but this was according to the due order of things in such Par-

liamentary anticipations, for the Houses of Lords and Commons are no more free from rats than other edifices; and it is the nature of such vermin to be continually shifting and changing sides.

"Among my youthful contemporaries in so clerical a hot-bed as Christ Church, there could not fail to be plenty of future parsons; some of these have shot up to the height of dignitaries, partaking in the honours and revenues of a Cathedral, or a Collegiate Church; others have branched into the rank of incumbents, with all the pastoral fruition of fat benefices, glebe land, 'tithe pig, and mortuary guinea.'* The late Doctor Hall was dean; Doctor Pett, archdeacon, and Doctor Dowdeswell, are canons of Christ Church, the College in which they were under-graduates. Doctor Webber is an archdeacon, and a residentary canon of Chichester; and the names of David Curzon, Robert Lowth, Henry Drummond, Charles Sandby, *cum multis aliis*, have all, if I mistake not, been annexed to good Church preferment. With the above-mentioned divines, omitting Doctor Phineas Pett, I was intimate; they are all, I believe, alive, and I hope well, except Dr. Hall and the much lamented Robert Lowth. I left them, when they were young, in the fostering bosom of *Alma Mater*, seldom or never to meet again! Though inhabiting the same island, and often probably sojourning in the same town together, our dissimilar avocations have placed us 'far as the poles asunder.' They took the righteous

* So Pope, in imitation of Swift, speaks of

'October store, and best Virginia,
'Tithe-pig, and mortuary guinea.'

road in life, and have prospered; while I, like 'a reckless libertine,' preferred 'the primrose path' to wicked playhouses, and became, in every acceptance of the phrase, *a poor poet.*

"Had my rage for scribbling, by the by, broken out before I quitted Oxford, I do not recollect any rival, the Professor of Poetry* always excepted, whom I should have encountered in the whole University,† but Poet Harding. This man was a half crazy creature, as poets indeed generally are, and was well-known in most of the colleges. He ran the bell-man hard in composition, but could not come up to him in rank, or in riches; living chiefly upon what he could get from the undergraduates, by engaging to find instantaneously a rhyme for any word in the English language; and, when he could not find, he coined one; as in the case of *rimney* for chimney, which he called a wild rhyme. To this *improvisare* talent, he added that of personification; sometimes he walked about with a scythe in his hand as Time; sometimes with an anchor, as Hope. One day, I met him with a huge broken brick, and some bits of thatch, upon the crown of his hat: on my asking him for a solution of this *prosopopœia,* 'Sir,' said he, 'to-day is the anniversary of the celebrated Doctor Goldsmith's death, and I am now in the character of his 'Deserted Village.'"

* The Rev. Thomas Warton.

† Oxford was better stocked with poets in previous times, as appears by the following distich:—

'Alma novem genuit celebres Rhedycina poetas,
'Bubb, Stubb, Grubb, Crabb, Trapp, Young, Carey, Tickel, Evans.'

CHAPTER II.

1780—1781.

Miss Sophia Lee—Chapter of Accidents—Riots, 1780—Manager in Distress—Miles Peter Andrews—Wilson—Baddeley—Miss Harper—John Bannister, the Genius of Nonsense—Doctor Graham—Visit to Wynnstay—Private Performances—Wynnstay Actors—Bunbury—New Pieces at the Haymarket—Margravine of Anspach—Beggars' Opera Travestied—George the younger dispatched to Aberdeen—Sir Thomas Stepney—Jewell the Treasurer—Edinburgh Theatre—Fortune's Tavern—Jewell's Miscalculation—Sundries at Edinburgh.

In the commencement of the following year, 1789, Miss Sophia Lee, so well known by her works of fiction, addressed the subjoined letter to Mr. Colman on the subject of her popular comedy of 'The Chapter of Accidents,' produced at the Haymarket theatre. It was once intended to be an opera, in which the celebrated Catley was to play Bridget.

"Sir, Bath, Feb. 21, 1780.

"Any longer to conceal myself, would be failing in that confidence and respect your very polite reception of my opera claims. The favourable opinion your are pleased to express, Sir, highly flatters my vanity, while it conduces to my interest, and you shall find, by the deference with which I receive your sentiments, that I have not an unbecoming arrogance in maintaining my own. I am very sorry it is not in my power to learn them from your lips, but have, I must own, one proof of mediocrity of talents; I mean a

little prudence, which forbids my farther sacrificing a certain object in life to an uncertain one. If you will oblige me with your objections by letter, it shall be my first care to obviate, or accede, to them.

" The letter which introduced the opera was so true an account of my situation, that it wanted only my sex and name; on only one circumstance was I not perfectly explicit, since I gave a single reason for preferring Covent Garden while conscious of two; the strong desire of seeing Miss Catley appear in Bridget, which was written absolutely for her. The infinite advantage attending this I need not, I dare say, Sir, explain to you, nor how much pleasure it would give me still to hope it.

" In my own character, Sir, I repeat my acknowledgments for that distinction shown me as an author, and in either, shall always be happy to avow what is equally an honour to yourself and me.

I am, Sir,
Your most obliged humble servant,
SOPHIA LEE."

P.S.—I will trouble you, Sir, to address any future favour to Miss Lee, at Mrs. Cruss's, King's Mead, Bath.

" As the long vacation approached," continues Colman, the Younger, " I was happy in the prospect of getting into London, although at a time when people of good taste are glad to get out of it. The capital, even when its inhabitants are beginning to fry, still has charms for a young Oxonian; and its fascinations for me lay in one of the hottest parts of its heated atmosphere.

" While coerced to purer air, I was consoled by thinking that I should soon swelter behind my father's scenes, and inhale, through all the coming

dog-days, the rancid odour of his blazing lamps in the little theatre in the Haymarket. His occasional excursions to his villa were the chief drawbacks upon these suffocating delights. I dreaded his dragging me with him upon his visits to my once favourite Richmond; whither he retreated, as often as his business would permit, to enjoy his verdant slopes, his green willows, and the refreshing breezes on the banks of the pellucid Thames. I detested all his greens but his green-room; all rural scenery which was not painted in distemper, all purling streams but a tin cascade by candlelight; and, as to refreshing breezes, so play-house mad was I in those days, that I would have solicited the privilege of *entrée* to the Black-hole in Calcutta, if it had been crammed with comedians.

"I came to town, this year, 1780, not long after the insurrection, vulgarly denominated Lord George Gordon's riots.

"On the evening of my arrival from Oxford, I dined *tête-à-tête* in Soho Square with my father; and immediately after dinner, I was in a fidget to get behind the scenes. I had made myself 'point-device in my accoutrements;' my hair was powdered and frizzled after the newest fashion, and I expected that the carriagé would soon be at the door to convey us to the Haymarket. No carriage, however, had been ordered, and my father, who had given many a silent glance at my costume, and was well aware how eager I was to show off in the green-room, thought no doubt that it would be a salutary joke to mortify my coxcombry, and check my impatience;

he, therefore, drily said, that he would enjoy a cool stroll with me in St. James's Park, before he encountered the heat of the theatre. Of course I was all obedience; and so is a gentleman who is obliged to take a walk in a treadmill; for which he has not, I conceive, much more disinclination than I had for the evening promenade which was proposed to me.

"Although all scenery, except the scenery of a playhouse, was at that time lost upon me, I have thought since of the picturesque view which St. James's Park then presented: the encampment which had been formed there, in consequence of the recent riots, was breaking up, but many tents remained; and seeming to be scattered, from the removal of others, out of the formal line which they originally exhibited, the effect they produced under the trees, and near the canal, was uncommonly gay and pleasing.

"During the walk we naturally talked of the late dreadful disturbances; and on my inquiring how it affected the theatre, my father told me, that, on the seventh of June, on which day and night desolation had attained its climax, and London is said to have been seen from one spot blazing in thirty-six different parts, the receipt of his playhouse exceeded twenty pounds.

"This sum appears somewhat of the smallest for the night's receipt of a Theatre Royal in London; but how, instead of twenty pounds-worth of spectators, twenty persons, or one person, could have calmly paid money to witness, in the midst of this general dismay, a theatrical entertainment, is astonishing! Even the musicians before the curtain,

were it not well known that they fiddle nightly to earn their daily bread, must have appeared like so many Neros, playing tunes over the flaming town and enjoying the conflagration.

"This being the fourth season of my father's summer speculation, the theatre had in the course of that time been improved in its accommodation and internal appearance, and its histrionic company much ameliorated. Henderson, indeed, did not renew his engagement after the first season; and Parsons had seceded this year, although he returned in 1782; but Palmer, Edwin, and Miss Farren, three towers of strength, with the elder Bannister, Digges, and several others of value in the formation of a respectable company, who had all started with the new scheme, were still retained; while many excellent performers, in their different lines, had gradually joined them.

"The only new dramas worth notice, produced during the summer in 1780 at the Haymarket theatre, were The Manager in Distress, Fire and Water, The Chapter of Accidents, and The Genius of Nonsense. The Manager in Distress was an occasional Prelude, written by my father. It was very favourably received, and had a run; the occasional distress is supposed to arise from a detention of most of the summer manager's *corps dramatique* at the winter theatres: an apology is formally made for their absence; when certain individuals among the audience, that is, actors personating auditors, start up successively from their seats, in the Pit and Boxes, and propose various means

of furnishing nightly entertainments, to be given by the manager, without the assistance of performers.

"There was much intrinsic pleasantry in this Occasional Prelude; the folly of debating societies, both male and female, which then raged, was cleverly ridiculed. Mrs. Webb haranguing as a lady of the Belle Assemblée,* and the younger Bannister giving his admirable Imitations: all these were enough in themselves to establish the Manager in Distress as a favourite: but, besides these, the unusual effect created by performers speaking from the different parts of the house in which they were dispersed, was an attraction.

"This device of driving characters in a drama beyond the boundaries of the stage, and transporting the actors of them over the Orchestra, led the way to sundry practices of the same kind, which have in latter days been successful; it was, however, only an old trick new revived, for we may trace it up to The Knight of the Burning Pestle, by Beaumont and Fletcher, where the grocer enters, to interrupt the Prologue; and then calls up his wife and apprentice from the Pit; who both talk there, before they get upon the boards: and this, again, might have been suggested by Ben Jonson, who was fond of making performers personate a part of the audience, by bringing them upon the stage to criticize a new play during its progress.†

* The Belle Assemblée met, to the best of my recollection, at the famed Mrs. Cornely's, in Soho Square. Carlisle House, the scene of these nocturnal revelries, is now pulled down.

† See three of his comedies. The Staple of News, Every Man out of his Humour, and The Magnetic Lady.

There may be other instances still earlier; but I do not, at present, recollect any.

"Fire and Water, a musical piece, in two acts, the production of Miles Peter Andrews, a dealer in gunpowder, conjured up such combined ideas of incendiaries on one hand, and military operations on the other, of engines from the Insurance Offices, to quench conflagrations, and the discharge of muskets to quell a mob, that many persons were indignant at the title; considering it as the announcement of a dramatic *mauvaise plaisanterie*, allusive to the recent riots, which certainly were much beyond a joke. But the author averred that 'there was no such stuff in his thoughts;' and that he had written and entitled his farce just as he had made and sold his gunpowder, that is, long before the disturbances had occurred. Whether this declaration, or the merits of the music and acting, for there was little merit in the writing, checked the tokens of disapprobation, I cannot say; but Fire and Water, contrary to expectation, and to the usual consequence of these elements coming together, did not produce a hiss. The piece was repeated many times during the season in which it was produced; since which it has taken a comfortable nap upon the prompter's shelf, and nobody has ever thought of disturbing it: even the fond author could in justice only heave a sigh over its repose, and say in the words of Lady Anne Bothwell's Lament,

'Balow, my babe, lie still and sleep!'

"Miss Lee's 'Chapter of Accidents,' long and justly rated as a stock comedy, is so well known

that it is quite needless to expatiate upon its merits; but the excellent acting in it throughout, on its first production, may partly show how the Haymarket company of performers had improved since the first year of my father's management. In the original cast of this play, we find the potent names of Palmer, as Woodville; Edwin, as Jacob; and Miss Farren, as Cecilia; nor should Aickin be forgotten, as Grey; nor even Mrs. Love, in the minor part of the housekeeper. All these started with the new scheme, in addition to whom there were, in this same comedy, Bensley, Wilson, Bannister, junior, Lamash, Mrs. Cuyler, and Mrs. Wilson, who had all been engaged subsequently to 1777. These last were performers of acknowledged talent, in their separate lines, except Mrs. Cuyler,* but she was a fine woman: a full-grown Irish Venus, without the Graces; and, though an indifferent actress, good enough for the indifferent part of Miss Mortimer, which was allotted to her. Bensley, who always maintained an upper rank upon the stage, both in Tragedy and Comedy, was respectable in all the characters he undertook, in spite of a stalk and a stare, a stiffness of manner and a nasal twang of utterance, which prevented his being very popular in most of them; but these drawbacks were advantages to him, in representing the buckram nobility of Lord Mortimer, in Miss Lee's play; and for the same reason his persona-

* Mrs. Cuyler is recorded to have been married to Dominic Rice, Esq., of Gray's Inn, February 21, 1778; but her name as Mrs. Cuyler, appears after this date in the play-bills.

tion of Malvolio, the starch and conceited steward, in Twelfth Night, was beyond all competition.

" Wilson was very effective as Governor Harcourt; he succeeded to Shuter's characters at Covent-Garden Theatre, and was so like him in look and person, as also in the chuckling laugh, toss of the head, and shrug of the shoulders, that the similitude, at first, Wilson being decidedly the inferior of the two, operated to his disadvantage, by exciting a painful remembrance of the lost old favourite, and a regret for his absence. Yet Shuter, I have been told, at the commencement of his career, as strongly reminded the audience of his predecessor Hippesley, as Wilson provoked a recollection of Shuter. Lamash was the prince of underling coxcombs and conceited valets-de-chambre. He was the original Jessamy, in ' Bon Ton,' and Trip, in the ' School for Scandal.' Mrs. Wilson, as Bridget, could not fail of success : she had a very pretty face, with a neat little figure; and was greatly approved in the *soubrettes*, and in characters of mixed archness and simplicity, such as ' The Country Girl,' in which Mrs. Jordan was afterwards so pre-eminent.

" Besides the performers mentioned in Miss Lee's play, as engaged after the year 1777, the following are to be added, as valuable acquisitions to the Haymarket company.

" Baddeley, of the Garrick School, a good actor, of various crabbed old men, and also the original Canton, in the Clandestine Marriage, and Moses, in the School for Scandal. Wewitzer, the best repre-

sentative of comic Jews and foreigners that perhaps ever was, or ever will be; he superseded Baddeley in this last walk, but was below par in every thing else. Mrs. Cargill, the once celebrated beauty, actress and singer; Miss Harper, soon afterwards Mrs. J. Bannister, who ranked during her professional career of sixteen years, as the first female singer in England, either on the stage, or at concerts. She made her *début*, and took her leave, at the Haymarket theatre. Too soon withdrawn from public exertion, she still continues to support the domestic character which has so long endeared her to her family and friends. Last, and certainly not least, Mrs. Webb, of corpulent memory: the original personater of O'Keefe's Mrs. Cheshire, with a banging voice, and a prodigious circumference of person. She exceeded Mrs. Davenport in size, as much as Mrs. Davenport excelled her (and, in certain characters, every body whom I remember) in her line of acting.

"Bannister, junior, whom, while detailing the *dramatis personæ* in this play, I have purposely left to the last, as I shall have more frequent mention to make of him than of the others, enacted the insipid part of Captain Harcourt; whereby he suffered the fate (not very uncommon for an actor who, before he is of age, begins his profession in London) of buckling to a drudgery very much below his innate excellence; but his abilities were then in the bud, and his line undecided; so he took, for the convenience of the theatre, any line, good, bad, or

indifferent, either in tragedy, comedy, or farce—no trifling proof of his versatility.

"After his long established celebrity, as a comedian, and the regret felt by lovers of the drama on his retirement from the stage, it is curious to recur to his earliest days in the Haymarket Theatre; when he was frequently tied to a sword, and rammed into a full-dress coat, to represent Lord Falbridge in The English Merchant, and other deadly lively characters, little above those which are called in stage language, walking gentlemen.* There was a very persevering sky-coloured suit of lace clothes, which was always lugged out of the Haymarket wardrobe for him upon such occasions; and Jack Bannister in his light blue and silver, with a sword by his side, was, to all play-goers of that time, as infallible a token of a clever young actor in a bad part, as deep mourning is the sign of death in a family; but, in the course of the same nights, when he was thus misplaced, he often performed some other character effective in itself, and rendered more so by his own powers.

"'The Genius of Nonsense,' written by my father, and produced in this same season, corroborates the foregoing statement. It was advertised as an original, whimsical, operatical, pantomimical, military tem-

* Bannister, jun., made his first appearance on any stage, 27th August, 1778, at the Haymarket Theatre, as Dick, in 'The Apprentice,' for his father's benefit. The true bent of his genius was developed by his performance of Don Ferolo Whiskerandos, in 'The Critic.'—*Biog. Dramatica.*

porary, local Extravaganza, and it was observed upon it, in some of the newspapers, that 'The Genius of Nonsense,' was the 'Nonsense of Genius.'

"The late celebrated Doctor Graham was humorously satirised in this piece; but what was somewhat remarkable was, that the Doctor himself was in the stage-box the first night, and besides the mortification of seeing his Temple of Health so masterly ridiculed, he had the additional chagrin of being refused purchasing one of the bills delivered upon the stage, as a burlesque of his own.*

"Those who cannot remember the above-mentioned Doctor, may, probably, have heard of him, as one of the most *outré* quacks, in his time. His house, or Temple, as he denominated it, was gaudily fitted up, on the Terrace in the Adelphi; there he gave evening lectures upon electricity; there he exhibited his satin sofas on glass legs, and his Celestial Bed, which was to effect Heaven only knows what; there his two porters outside the door, in long tawdry great coats and immense gold-lace cocked hats, distributed his puffs in hand-bills, while his Goddess of Health was dying of a sore throat, by squalling songs at the top of his cold staircase.

"All these matters were introduced in 'The Genius of Nonsense,' and help me in explaining the 'additional chagrin' mentioned by Oulton, which, without elucidation, would be quite unintelligible some years hence. The quack, having heard of the

* Oulton's History of the Theatres.

forthcoming satire, threatened to bring an action for a libel, and came to the theatre to collect all the evidence he could, in support of his menaced prosecution; he, therefore, protruded his arm, repeatedly from the stage-box, to procure a hand-bill from the representatives of his own porters, which they as repeatedly refused to give him.

"Bannister, junior, was selected as the speaking harlequin of this piece; in which character he was to transform himself, among other metamorphoses, into Doctor Graham, whom he had never seen, nor I believe intended to see. He doubted, perhaps, whether it might be prudent to ridicule personally upon the stage, a man who was meditating an action at law against his satirists; and thought that a broad outline, sketched after his own fancy, of any ideal charlatan, would answer the purpose; my father thought otherwise, and insisted upon a portrait of the individual empiric. The young actor, therefore, in obedience to his manager's instructions, communicated to him only on the day previous to the production of the Extravaganza, visited the Temple of Health, to bestow one transient evening's glance upon the doctor. I was delighted by his allowing me to accompany him on this expedition; we saw the Græme* go through his nonsensical solemnities, in which nothing struck me as worthy theatrical adoption, till the very same things were done on the next night after the above-mentioned cursory view of them by Bannister. His mere entrance upon the

* Spelled after the Scottish pronunciation. See 'The Lady of the Lake,' Canto II., Note 2.

scene, as the doctor was wont to present himself in his Temple, his grotesque mode of sliding round the room, the bobbing bows he shot off to the company, while making his circuit, and various other minutiæ, were so ridiculously accurate, that he surpassed his prototype in electrifying the public, and the whole house was in a roar of laughter.

"That the quack was a consummate quiz, could scarcely fail to be perceived by the dullest vision; but I accused myself of having been stone-blind to all the stage-effect producible from him, which the eagle eye of Bannister had seen through in a minute: I forgot however, that the power of genuine imitation is, in the first instance a gift, although it may be afterwards improved by study; and that one of its characteristics is the quickness of seizing upon peculiarities too slight for general observation; but which, when once pointed out, are so manifest, that we wonder how we could have overlooked them.

"The casual greetings between Jack Bannister and myself behind the scenes of the Haymarket Theatre, soon advanced to better acquaintance, in consequence of my having gone with him on his mission to the quack doctor; and although, in the subsequent autumn and winter, our different destinations kept him in the metropolis and sent me to Christ-Church, still we maintained an intercourse, as often as I stole a march, with some fellow collegian as wild and idle as myself, from Oxford to London. On these expeditions, the company of Jack Bannister, on our arrival, was always a grand desideratum; his frolicsome spirit was congenial with that of a young

'Oxonian in Town,' and his talents were a high treat: we thought ourselves fortunate, therefore, whenever we could get him to join us in the intervals of his business.

"A little before Christmas in 1780, my father made a halt at Oxford on his road to Wales, and took me with him from Christ Church to Wynnstay: that seat of festive opulence which so much delighted me; for young as I was, the kindness and favouritism with which I was received there, independently of the courtesies shown to my father, were so marked and unaffected, that I cannot recur to them, at this late day, without feelings of very grateful retrospection.

"But this my journey thither for the third, and as it happened last time, was a mixture of the allegro and pensieroso. My joyous anticipation of the Wynnstay gaieties would have blazed out upon the road, if they had not been considerably damped by the constrained manner of my father; who had not forgotten certain of my flights which had displeased him, during my visit to town in the preceding long vacation. He did not, it is true, expect me to elucidate his own definition in the *Genius of Nonsense*, of an 'agreeable companion in a postchaise,'* which is, a person who sleeps all the way and defrays half the expenses; but I was in disgrace with him, and we were therefore far from being conversational; and as constantly as we

* It was not unusual at this time to advertise for an associate on a journey, and there was a register office where people went to apply for an 'agreeable companion in a postchaise.'

began a fresh stage, my father as constantly struck up '*loora la loo*,' an attempt at an old tune, to which Gay has adapted his song of 'Early one morn a jolly brisk tar;' this melody he always executed without the words, and in so dismal a style, that there was nothing left in the name of *Gay* which could possibly be attached to the music: he generally began with *forte*, subsiding gradually with *piano*, and *pianissimo*, till at the end of a quarter of a mile, he sank into perfect silence."

Annexed is a Wynnstay playbill, which is here introduced to shew that George the Elder, and George the Younger, were amateurs and actors in the same performances.

AT THE THEATRE, AT WYNNSTAY,

On Monday, January 15th, 1781, will be presented,

RULE A WIFE, AND HAVE A WIFE.

Duke of Medina, Mr. Griffith; Don Juan, Mr. Nares; Alonzo, Roberts; Copper Captain, Mr. Aldersey; Leon, Mr. Bunbury; Cacafogo, Carter; Margarita, Mrs. Apperley; Altea, Miss E. Ravenscroft; Estifania, Mrs. Cotes; Old Woman, Mr. G. Colman; Maid, Wilkinson.

To which will be added,

BON TON.

Lord Minikin, Mr. G. Colman; Sir John Trotloy (with the original prologue) Mr. Colman; Colonel Tivy, Mr. Griffith; Jessamy, Mr. Bunbury; Davy, Sir W. W. Wynn; Mignon, Wilkinson; Lady Minikin, Mrs. Apperley; Miss Tittup, Mrs. Cotes; Gymp, Miss E. Ravenscroft.

To begin precisely at Seven o'Clock,

N.B.—No Person to be admitted without a Ticket, which may be had of S. Sidebotham, at Wynnstay.

"The male performers in the foregoing play-bill, whose names are undistinguished by the slight

courtesy of Mister, were servants, or in some sort retainers, of Sir Watkin; for instance, Carter was the Cook, 'a fellow of excellent fancy,' and really a good low comedian; this account of him, by the by, will apply equally to his public prototype Baddeley, except that the latter abandoned the kitchen before he took to the stage; whereas Carter, during the Wynnstay entertainments, was *in utrumque paratus*. Wilkinson was a stroller at the time, coming annually to Wynnstay, to do what he was wont to do, for the rest of the year on his circuit, paint scenes and daub characters as occasion required. C. Sidebotham was a relation of the butler, and Roberts an upper domestic. Meredith had been a cooper, and was a bass singer of some celebrity, Sir Watkin having caused him to be instructed in music. The vocal powers of this *bon tonnellier* were well known in certain districts of England, at Concerts and in Cathedrals. Three of the above-mentioned five, Carter, Wilkinson, and Meredith, however humble in worldly rank, were no mean auxiliaries to the Wynnstay company of amateurs.

"Of the principal performers among the ladies and gentlemen, the two Misses Ravenscroft became Mrs. Vanburgh and Jenkins; the very pretty Miss Jones, then called, from the brilliancy of her eyes, the Sparkler, married Mr. Greaves. These three ladies, all natives of North Wales, are still living. Mrs. Cotes was a Courtenay, wife of the late John Cotes, then Member of Parliament for Wigan, and afterwards for Shropshire.

"The two great heroes in my time at Wynnstay,

were Harry Bunbury, and little Bob Aldersey, as he was called, and who, they said, was like Garrick: he was punchy, like Garrick in his latter days, but in other respects, alas! alas!

"Mr. Bunbury was brother to the late Sir Charles Bunbury, and Lieutenant-Colonel, for many years, in the Suffolk Militia, under the Duke of Grafton. He, I believe, at last commanded it, but retired on the close of the first French war, and fixed himself at Keswick in Cumberland, where he died. Neither his military nor his histrionic powers were of that description to transmit his name to posterity: even now the recollection of them, and of his agreeable manners, are fading in the minds of his surviving acquaintance; but his graphic talent, so conspicuous for sportive fancy in his caricatures, as well as for elegance in other specimens of his pencil, will long preserve the memory of his genius.

"Aldersey was a barrister and commissioner of bankrupts, and afterwards a bencher of the Temple. He continued an heir apparent till after sixty, and then for a short time enjoyed the family estate. Mr., afterwards Archdeacon Nares, was then domestic tutor to the present Sir Watkin and his brother Mr. Charles Wynne, who at the time of my visits to Wynnstay was so young a child, that I remember his being permitted one day after dinner to scramble on his hands and knees across the plenteous table of his indulgent parents.

"Death, alas! has made sad havock in the Cambrian Company, of which I was a member! inso-

much that the foregoing extracts which I have given from printed authorities in the Wynnstay theatrical archives, might serve almost as well for bills of mortality, as for bills of the play.

" It was late in January 1781, when I returned from Wynnstay to Oxford, whence, in the ensuing long vacation while the dog-star raged, I revisited the deserts of London, to enjoy another summer's suffocation in my father's theatrical hot-house.

" My journey, at the beginning of the vacation, was in the company of a young college friend, who was afterwards a clergyman, and of whom hereafter; we clubbed in the expenses, and were conveyed from stage to stage, through the pride and aristocracy of our under-graduated hearts, from Oxford to our separate homes, by means of a hack post-chaise and pair. Having passed the Lodge, and driven through the avenue to the Bishop of London's palace at Fulham, I set down my friend at the Bishop's, his father's gate, and proceeded to my own paternal habitation in Soho-square. During the vacation I frequently visited Lowth at Fulham; but our intercourse, from that time, ceased from my never returning to Oxford, and my unwilling emigration to Scotland, which followed in the same year.

" During the season 1781, the chief Haymarket novelties were (I do not give them in their regular succession) ' The Dead Alive,' and ' The Agreeable Surprise,' two farces by O'Keeffe ; ' The Baron Kinkvervantkotsdorsprakengatchdern,' a musical comedy, by Miles Peter Andrews ; ' The Silver

Tankard; or, the Point of Portsmouth,' a musical farce, by Lady Craven; and the Burlesque Ballet of 'Medea and Jason.'

"Of these, the first two mentioned farces succeeded as they deserved; most particularly the last, in which Edwin's Lingo was so irresistibly comical, Mrs. Webb's Mrs. Cheshire so broadly effective, and Mrs. Wells's Cowslip so beautifully silly, that these supports of an eccentric author's excellent fun carried all before them. This was as it should be; for what does this kind of entertainment mean but pleasant absurdity? It pledges itself for nothing more: yet how many fastidious coxcombs come and condemn it, only because it is as extravagant as its very term, farce, implies? Why not they in their sapience, keep away, when they are modestly forewarned of what they are to expect, and make room for those who love 'laughter holding both his sides?' If indeed the nonsense be really dull, down with it at once; but a score of pedants, fine leather-headed, hissing hypercritics, dispersed through a theatre, have driven many a good farce on its first night off the stage.

"The musical comedy of 'The Baron,' with a long hard German name, taken from a novel, of the same title, written by Lady Craven, afterwards Margravine of Anspach, was played during three nights of tumultuous disapprobation, and then withdrawn.

"'The Silver Tankard,' contained nothing palatable to the audience; and the second title of the piece, 'The Point of Portsmouth,' threatened that

failure which came to pass, if only from the fair authoress's ignorance of the spot in which she had very strangely placed her scene of action.

" The Margravine frequently observed of herself, that she ' was bred in Courts,' but, to pourtray the humours of the Point at Portsmouth with any verisimilitude, she must have been brought up in alleys ; and had she been competent to the task, the fidelity of delineation would have been offensive to delicacy. Her Tankard, at the end of six nights, was put upon the shelf ; thus, in one short summer, she suffered under literary disgrace, both *per alium* and *per se ;* indirectly, in the first instance, through Miles Peter Andrews, who dramatised her writing ; directly, in the second, through her own attempts at writing a drama.

" Medea and Jason was the burlesque of a grand serious Ballet, then acting, with great applause, on the other side of the way at the Italian Opera House. This satirical dumb-show, which made a hit, required extraneous performers, of whom Delpini, the popular clown of his day, was the head.

" One great attraction of the season was that monstrous exhibition, ' The Beggars' Opera reversed ;' represented August 7th. This was a kind of theatrical world turned upside down, in which the men and women exchanged characters ; Macheath was performed by the lovely Mrs. Cargill; Filch, by pretty Mrs. Wilson; Peachum, by a Mrs. Lefevre ; Lockit, by Mrs. Webb ; old Bannister and Edwin were the Polly and Lucy ; Wilson, Mrs. Peachum ; Parsons, Diana Trapes; and so on through the whole

dramatis personæ. This travesty was introduced by an occasional Preludio, as it was called, said to be written by George Keate, which was sprightly enough, but some of the jokes in it are extremely gross; the Biographia Dramatica quotes them; and tells us that the subject was 'very well handled, and *neatly pointed.*'* The most whimsical part of this prelude is the second scene, in a coffee-house, which was borrowed, if not chiefly translated, without any avowal of its obligations, from one of the Proverbes Dramatiques, called '*Les Foux.*'

"The manager's appetite must have been extremely keen when the 'sacred hunger for gold'† induced him to bring upon the stage the indecorous catchpenny of the reversed Beggars' Opera. It may be doubted, but bold is he who will be responsible for the caprices of any age, past, present, or to come, whether the existing taste of society would tolerate, throughout the whole play, so complete a perversion of the sexes;‡ or whether theatrical despotism be now so strong as to force a large body of performers into such a simultaneous transformation, since it is difficult to suppose that they were all volunteers in this nauseous entertainment. Many of the actresses for instance, must have been conscious of their want of symmetry for male attire; trowsers were not then in fashion; nor were boots furnished for

* For George Keate, styled F. R. and moreover A. S. S.—and also for his Preludio, see *Biog. Dram.* Vol. I., p. 177–178.

† ———— "quid non mortalia pectora cogis,
Auri sacra fames! VIRGIL, ÆNEID 3.

‡ It has been tried again once, and lately, for a benefit at Covent Garden Theatre—and justly exploded.

gentlewomen upon low salaries; those females, therefore, who could not afford the last articles appeared not only *en culottes*, but in silk stockings; and certes among the she-highwaymen belonging to Macheath's gang, thus accoutred, there were, to quote the song of Jemmy Jumps, in 'The Farmer,'

Six feet ladies,
Three feet ladies,
Small legg'd ladies,
Thick legg'd ladies,

all with horse-pistols in their hands, screaming, 'let us take the road!' a feminine phalanx which constituted, as Macheath himself says of the Judges in the Old Bailey, 'a terrible show!' As to men, representing Jenny Diver, &c. &c. *proh pudor!* let me drop the curtain.

"In the autumn of this year, an event occurred which produced a material revolution in my 'May of Life.'

"The Haymarket Theatre had closed, the Oxford Term was approaching, when, lo! it pleased my father that I should keep Oxford Terms no more, nor enter London Theatres, for at least some seasons to come; in short he banished me to Scotland; and sent me to King's College in Old Aberdeen, escorted thither, whether under convoy or custody was somewhat equivocal, by the Chancellor of his Haymarket Exchequer, Mr. Jewell.

"On my arrival there I was to be turned over to the *surveillance* of Professor Roderick Macleod, but not to dwell in his house, with whom arrangements had been made, by epistolary correspondence. This was a just sentence, or rather a well-intended parental measure, to remove me from scenes of idleness

and dissipation, which not only London, but even Christ-Church, presented to those who sought after them, and into which I had been rushing *con gusto*. Alas! this happened too late: a dramatic fever, not to be subdued by the cool temperature of Northern climes, was already lurking in my veins, it lay dormant for the first months of my exile, and then began to rage.

"Should the reader expect me to detail the immediate causes of my enforced sojournment in the Land of Cakes, he will be disappointed. I am not sitting down at this time of day, for the simple and tedious purpose of registering all my wild oats seed by seed; suffice it to say, that, in scattering this kind of grain, I have seldom failed to reap, as in this instance of my exile, a plentiful crop of vexation; and that I think my early freaks and follies may, without any great stretch of charity, be attributed to the general heyday of youth, rather than to radical vice in the individual; at least, I satisfy my own conscience in these particulars, upon calm revisal, after a completion of my thirteenth *lustrum*.

"My father's financier and I started for Aberdeen in a hack post-chaise and pair. We left London at the fall of the leaf, when my companion's lower habiliments appeared somewhat shivering for the season, and an excursion to northern latitudes, consisting of thin nankeens, and light blue silk stockings, a costume maintained by him for many years, and all the year round; and in which I should pronounce him to have been absolutely singular, if my old acquaintance, the late Sir Thomas Stepney, had not been super-eminent for his pertinacity in the

same articles of apparel.* Jewell, however, wanted both rank and resolution for further peculiarities; he durst not venture on the remarkable squareness of coat, nor the black pancake which represented a hat upon the body and pericranium of Sir Thomas. As to the rest, therefore, he was clad like myself, who travelled according to the dandyism of that day; *videlicet*, a frock coat with gilt buttons, and large flapping lapelles; a cocked hat, powdered hair, tied behind in a queue, with curls in rollers; a frilled and ruffled shirt, very tight leather breeches, and boots, worn, as Falstaff says, 'like unto the sign of the leg.' I mention these trifles only to mark the fashions of the year 1781.

"Certain wiseacres of my father's councils, predicted that, when we had got about half way, I should give Jewell the slip; but I had no such intention, and if I had, whither was I to go, or how escape starvation? for, although I was to have a moderate annual allowance, at Aberdeen, to be doled out to me in quarterly driblets, by my superintending professor, old Rory Macleod, still the Haymarket Treasurer was purse-bearer on the road, and I had not a *sou*.

"Our first parents had 'all the world before them where to choose,' but then there was nothing to be paid for on their journey; whereas, in later times, horses, carriages, turnpikes, if you ride, and even hedge ale-houses, if you go on foot, are awkward requisites for a traveller, without a penny in his pocket.

"Other motives also restrained me from playing

* Gillray has perpetuated the form and costume of Sir Thomas, in one of his celebrated productions.

the Man of Finance a slippery trick: we had cultivated, during the preceding summer, a familiar intercourse with each other, which arose, I think, from a little self-interest, on both parts; but which made me look upon him rather as my kind companion than my *custos*. I had found him extremely obliging to me, in respect to those occasional small loans so convenient to most young Oxonians, in their visits to London; and he, probably, though no Machiavel, was politician enough to be more prone to accommodation to me, for he was not so to others, by speculating upon the chances of my becoming, sooner or later, Sovereign of the Haymarket Theatre, when his continuance in office would depend upon my sole will and pleasure. This event did afterwards occur; and he found, to the increase of his contentation, and to the decrease of my revenue, that his treasurership, under the young king, was much more productive than in the reign of the old monarch.

"We proceeded sociably, and refreshed merrily, notwithstanding my banishment, wherever we took up our rest for the night, on the high road to Aberdeen, by Ware, Worksop, and Boroughbridge. In passing through Northumberland, you obtain more than a *soupçon* of the Scottish borders; but a young traveller is always agog for wonders: the moment, therefore, that we had crossed the Tweed, I gaped at men, women, and children, as if they had been oran-outangs; and my expectations were greatly let down on finding just the same sort of human beings, in appearance, at one end of Coldstream Bridge, as I had seen at the other.

" At Edinburgh, we made a halt of three or four days, putting up at an obscure inn in the old town. Of course, we saw all the lions of the place, and went to a play. The theatre could not then boast the best of performers: it was in the hands of Jackson, the actor, whose name would have been forgotten long ago, if Churchill had not, in the later editions of the Rosciad, transmitted to posterity the glare of his countenance and the discord of his voice.

" Jackson was married to a lady who had undertaken an upper line of acting at Covent Garden, with little more popularity or permanence of engagement, than her husband had before experienced at Drury Lane.

" Jewell, who had been Foote's treasurer, when he had the Edinburgh theatre, was as opposite to his old master in profusion as he was below him in intellect, which is saying very much, remembered a celebrated Tavern called Fortune's, in the old town of Edinburgh: ' There,' quoth he, on the eve of resuming our journey towards Aberdeen, ' there we will dine to-day; and see what a number of excellent dishes we shall have, with all sorts of French wines, for nothing in comparison, as a body may say.'

" I was a little surprised at his proposal of such a luxurious dinner, till I recollected that, in the first place, it was to be miraculously cheap, and that, in the second, whether cheap or not, it would be eaten at my father's expense.

" On entering the tavern, we were conducted into a small apartment, which was, however, large enough for a *tête-à-tête*. In five minutes, our repast, which Jewell had previously ordered, was served up. Mr.

Fortune, as we called the new existing landlord of the old firm, came flourishing into the room with the first dish, followed, for Fortune hath always many followers, by five waiters. I whispered to my companion that all this parade threatened expense; he acknowledged that things were improved in style since he had dined in the house, but relied firmly on the ancient regime, and the reasonable rates of a Scottish market.

"We had, after our soup, fish, fowl, flesh, game, *entremêts*, and pastry; all admirably cooked and excellent in quality; but in such quantity, that the board appeared to groan under the weight of provisions; and I said to Jewell,

'Tis not a dinner, 'tis a hecatomb.

Jewell had never heard of a hecatomb, and when I explained to him that it was the sacrifice of a hundred oxen, he observed, pettishly, for he was sore at any fault being found with the house he had recommended, that he did not see a bit of beef upon the table. Other cattle, I told him, came to the same thing; he knew nothing of discriminative definitions; the hecatomb stuck in his throat, and he continued to grumble 'oxen,' till a glass or two of champagne had helped him to digest the whole hundred.

"Our dinner was followed by a dessert and claret; the last article was then at so low a price generally in Scotland, that, after we had finished one bottle, Jewell manfully rung the bell for a second; and with it ordered pen, ink, and paper: these being placed before us, he further told the waiter to bring the bill: 'And now, my dear sir,'

said Jewell, 'as this is our first stop of a day or two on the road, let me advise you to take this opportunity of writing a penitential letter to your father: tell him you will turn over a new leaf, particularly on the score of your extravagance; depend on it, it will shorten your banishment.'

"The foregoing oration is superior to the every-day style in which Mr. Jewell was wont to deliver his sentiments: he was remarkable for that figure of speech which is denominated slip-slop; and I am much indebted to him for furnishing me, though unconsciously, with various expressions which I have put into the mouth of Daniel Dowlas, in my comedy called 'The Heir at Law.'

"I differed from my adviser, in respect to the fitness of time, place, and circumstance, for penning a contrite epistle; not being of opinion that sitting at my age over claret and a dessert, in a tavern, after a profusion of viands, made-dishes, and champagne, was quite consistent with professions of penitence and promises of economical reform; however, I buckled to the work: sipping and dipping, between the wine bottle and ink-bottle, alternately.

"Having finished my letter, I looked up, and found that, while I had been writing, the waiter had given Jewell the bill: it appeared to be a long slip of paper, for a dinner which was to cost 'nothing in comparison, as a body may say:' he was perusing it with his under-jaw dropped, and a countenance completely proving how correct an observer our mighty bard was of nature when he wrote, 'it strikes a man more dead than a great reckoning in a little room.'

" ' Zounds !' bellowed Jewell, ' here's a dinner bill of five guineas, for two persons !'—' And there,' said I, giving him my letter, ' is repentance for profusion, and promise of economy, for the future.' ' Scandalous !' continued he, harping on the high charges, ' what am I to say in handing them over to your father?' ' Tell him,' I answered, ' that you will turn over a new leaf, particularly on the score of your extravagance.'—' Poh !' cried he, ' that is a sneer at my good advice, to shorten your banishment.' ' I wish, with all my heart,' returned I, ' that it could shorten the bill.'

" Instead of the good old Scottish mode of charging so much a-head for eating, the account was spun out, item by item ; and the bill was in fact as high as at the most expensive tavern in London.

" The playhouse treasurer would have made a scene of this ; had I not exerted myself to prevent him, he would have broken the bell-ropes to order up the landlord, that he might rail at fortune. Our ' dreadful reckoning' was ultimately discharged by my companion, with angry comments upon the *tempora mutantur*, violent expressions as to extortion, and a declaration upon oath that he would never enter the house again ; a threat not very formidable, as the chances were that he never would revisit it, even had things remained for ever in their primitive state of cheapness. I found, many years afterwards, upon inspecting some of my deceased father's papers, that this unlucky bill had been whelmed, by his treasurer, in a sweeping article of ' sundries at Edinburgh.'

CHAPTER III.

1781—1783.

Queen's Ferry—Perth—Brechin—Laurence Kirk—Inn, Library, and Album — Stonehaven — Aberdeen — Professor Roderick Macleod—University—King's College—Fellow Collegians—Inventory of Furniture—Charles Burney—Laird of Col—Isle of Muck—King's College Library—Lecture on Mathematics—Professor of Economy—Macleod Married—College Costume—Freedom of the City—Aberdeen Mohocks—Colman the Younger's first Ballad—His first Poem and his first Farce—'The Female Dramatist.'

"NEXT morning (we continue the narrative of the reminiscences of George Colman the younger) we resumed our way northward through Perth, &c. Seven miles from Edinburgh, we had to pass the Frith of Forth, at Queen's Ferry, about two miles across, in a wide open vessel, a kind of barge, at the bottom of which there happened to be stowed a drove of horned cattle. As it blew hard,they were not very pleasant, or safe fellow-passengers for us ; but, in making the *trajet* with these quadrupeds, over whose backs we were sometimes in danger of being rolled, I could not help observing to the biped with me, 'Jewell, here's another

hecatomb.' This joke failed, as might be expected, to produce a smile from my companion, but he was less nettled at it than hurt. 'Can't you see, my dear sir,' said he, in a deprecatory tone, 'can't you see how very sensual I am, about that confounded dinner?' 'I saw you were so, yesterday,' said I. 'I'm just as bad to day,' he returned; and as he really was very sensitive about it, which was what he meaned to express, I abstained from further allusion to the occurrence.

"After a day's journey of eighty-five miles from Edinburgh, we came, in the dark, to Brechin; a place which requires not the obscurity of night to render it dismal. Here we had a late dinner, having eat nothing since breakfast, of all that the Swan, a wretched inn, could produce; it consisted of black mutton-chops, fried, greasy, and woolly; a complete contrast to our luxurious fare of the day before! We were afterwards conducted to a double-bedded room, from which a decent English garret would have been refuge, to sleep, if we could, upon mattresses very like sacks of potatoes. As the weather was cold and damp, we had ordered fire; but the chimney, long unaccustomed to the element, afforded so much more smoke than warmth, that the window of our chamber was kept open, to prevent suffocation.

"At dawn we left our beds to rest ourselves, and were seated at the door of the Swan, in a rattling chaise, to pursue our rough route, before it was broad day. Our postillion tickled my fancy, as a good specimen of phlegm in a Scottish boor. No landlord or landlady, no waiter, male or female, made their appearance, to 'speed the parting guest,'

the post-boy—the boy, by the by, seemed to be sixty, tucked us up in the chaise, then mounted his horse, and there he sat motionless, for five minutes. I bawled out to him, at last, ‘ Why the devil don't you set off?' to which he answered, without turning his head, or in the least altering his position, ‘ I need a dram.' It was as if the equestrian statue had spoken in the burlesque of Don Juan. We waited five minutes more, when out came a raw-boned, red-haired wench, with a huge bumper of Scotch whiskey, which she administered to Sandy on horseback, who poured the draught through his marble jaws, without interchanging a word with Meggy ; he then uttered some provincial jargon to the steeds, and we quitted the inn door, with no English crack of the whip, and bolt off at starting, but as if we were going to a funeral.

“ From Brechin to Laurence Kirk, a paltry place ; but of late years known to snuff-takers, from the neat wooden snuff boxes made there, and sent to London, where we breakfasted. A Scotch breakfast is always good ; tea, coffee, or any beverage you please, all kinds of bread, honey, marmalade, new laid eggs, and delicious finnon haddocks ; but plague upon their bapps, and their mutton hams ! The first are a doughy sort of something, between a roll and a twist ; the last have a strong smell and taste, overpowering to acute nostrils, and delicate stomachs.

“ At the Boar's Head in Laurence Kirk, we broke our fast in the Library ! a small room so called from there being in it a glazed book-case, filled, easily filled, with books, and mounted upon a bureau,

after the fashion of sundry snug little back parlours in England. This slender collection of volumes was a kindly gift from the late Lord Gardenstone, to amuse and cheer the traveller who baited at a lonely inn. An album lay upon the table, requesting him to insert in it any extract he chose from classical authors, or anything original from himself. The reader will anticipate how this album was abused, till it became scrawled over with ribaldry, like the panes of an inn window. The library was much improved before I left Scotland, indeed superseded, by a new built room, and a considerable addition of books.

"After Lawrence Kirk to Stonehaven, or as it is commonly called Stonehive, a sea-port of romantic misery; here we changed horses at the Mill, and were dragged at a mill-horse pace to Aberdeen.

"For many a weary mile, from Edinburgh to my seat of banishment, the country grew more and more sterile in appearance; till from Stonehive to Aberdeen, it became naked desolation! a waste of peat, varied only by huge masses of stone, sticking up here and there in the bogs, and even in the middle of the road. Had Ovid gone this stage on his way to exile, how would the chicken-hearted poet have spun out his longs and shorts, to whimper about it, in his unmanly *De Tristibus!*

"I expected that my eyes would be relieved when we came to the parks, which they told me were within a few miles of Aberdeen; but, on reaching them, these parks proved to be a few fields of bad grass, enclosed by stone hedges.

"We had daylight enough, after reaching the New

Inn at New Aberdeen, to have gone about the town while dinner was dressing; but there came on a Scotch mist, which, we had heard, wets Englishmen to the skin; so we looked through the windows. All was dull, dull, dull! The very gaieties of sight and sound conjured up the blue devils. In an open space before us, there stood a wet-through Company belonging to a highland regiment of fencibles; these *sans-culottes* were dolefully drawn up in the drizzling rain, ankle deep in the mud, while the drone of a bagpipe, I forget whether it belonged to the regimental band, kept Maggy-Lauder-ing and *Lochaber-no-more-ing* enough to drive its hearers melancholy mad!

"Much was to be done by us before the next evening, for Jewell was then to set-off in the diligence on his return to London. On the morning, therefore, immediately following our arrival, we walked from New to Old Aberdeen, a march of only a mile, that I might be consigned to Professor Roderick Macleod.

"Sent down to Scotland as a delinquent to be reformed, I expected of course to be placed under a very rigid disciplinarian, and had pictured the professor, in my fancy, as a starch, pedantic, North Briton, the emblem of collegiate austerity. Honest Rory was just the reverse; he was a square-built person, of perhaps five-feet eight, seemingly between fifty and sixty years of age, with a ruddy, good-humoured countenance, and the manner and dress of a gentleman-farmer. He shook me by the hand, and gave me a hearty welcome, but immediately turned to Jewell, and owned that he was rather sorry for my

arrival, 'for,' said he, 'a young Englishman breeds muckle harm to our lads frae the highlands—he is allowed what I may ca' a little fortune, and sets unco' bad examples of economy.' He did not utter one word about college regulations and studies, but was anxious to settle me in comfortable apartments in the college, for which he told me I must wait; they were all with bare walls, and I must paper and furnish, before I could inhabit them. In the mean time he recommended my getting a lodging with Mrs. Lowe, who lived in the cabin, one story high, opposite to the college gate.

"It was easy to see, from the first short interview, that old Rory meaned to act towards me more as my *homme d'affaires*, than my tutor. With full instructions from him whither to proceed, we wished him a good morning—chose my apartments in the college; then to Mrs. Lowe; hired her best room; thence to New Aberdeen for an early dinner, back again to the Old Town, to take possession *chez* Madame Lowe; and now the time was come for Jewell to bid me farewell, and leave me in a land of strangers. We parted, and my spirits sank. Night arrived, and the landlady brought me up one tallow candle, which she said would make me cheerful. I looked round the whitewashed room; a truckle-bed stood in the corner of it; some square bits of peat smouldered on the pavement of the fire-place, which had no grate; the wind began to rise, the hail to pelt, and the curtainless window to rattle. I thought on Mary Queen of Scots, when 'the walls did but echo her moan;' then on Bobadil, in Cobb's House. I was wretched, and as the best remedy

against wretchedness which I knew then, or know now, is to go to sleep as fast as you can; I undressed myself, turned down my tallow-candle, for want of an extinguisher, and into bed.

"There are two towns of Aberdeen, the Old and the New. In each of these there is a University, each University consisting of one College, and each making a very inferior appearance in the eyes of an Oxonian, or a Cantab. To that of the Old Town mere boys pour in from the Highlands, and other parts of the country, and sojourn there for five months annually; the remaining seven months being a period of uninterrupted vacation. They occupy almost unfurnished rooms, with bare walls, huddling two, three, and sometimes, perhaps, four in a bed. The accommodation of my Scotch servant, who had a room and bed to himself, exhibited a luxury which excited their envy. They commence with the very rudiments of Latin and Greek, proceed to Mathematics, and in four years these young gentlemen, having begun and finished their education, are created Masters of Art, or even dubbed Doctors, if they choose, at the age perhaps of sixteen or eighteen, without any intermediate degree. The University of the New Town I understood to be conducted on the same principles. Let it be remembered I have given an account of the state of things as they were when I happened to see them. They may since have been amended; we live in an age of improvement, but it is to be doubted whether the advancement of an Aberdeen University has, of late years, been rapid.

"As for the small college to which I was con-

signed, it stands a few yards from the road side; yet, although it boasts to be a university in itself, may easily escape the particular notice of a traveller, posting through the city. Gibson, in his additions to Camden's Britannia, observes, King's College, 'for neatness and stateliness much exceeds the rest of the houses; one side is covered with slate and the rest with lead.' The combination of neatness and stateliness is rather startling; 'tis like talking of a full-dressed quaker; but to state that King's College, a university *per se*, exceeds the rest of the houses in stateliness, and such houses as those of Old Aberdeen, alas! is saying little. But then, one side was covered with slate and the rest with lead! 'Prodigious!' as Dominie Samson says. How such magnificence was distributed, Gibson does not precisely inform us; nor do I recollect having been high-minded enough to take due note of the roofs; the cheaper slate probably was chosen in olden times to shelter the young students, while lead was more appropriately lavished upon the grave heads of the community.

"It may be supposed that the society of such a horde of young barbarians, migrating from their mountains, to be half-civilized, was not congenial with my inclination or habits. They had not yet made their periodical incursion, as it wanted some days to the beginning of Term, which is on the first of November, and I should have lived, when they had effected their descent, in solitude among them, had I not very happily found two young Englishmen, residing in apartments belonging to

the same staircase as my own. Both are since deceased. One of them was Mr. John David Perkins, afterwards a Doctor of Divinity, Vicar of Dawlish in Devonshire, and a Chaplain to the King's Household; the other, Mr. Earle, son of a gentleman of landed property in Yorkshire. These two messed together, and on my arrival admitted me as a partner to their table; we thus formed a *triumvirate* club, dining every day, by turns, in each other's rooms. Our dinner was prepared by the above-mentioned Mrs. Lowe, whose usual appellation was Lucky Lowe, meaning, in vulgar Scotch colloquy, dame, or mother; and whom we drilled at last into a tolerable cook. She performed, indeed, her culinary functions, on my first day of joining the mess somewhat ignorantly, by stuffing a roasted fillet of veal with plum-pudding; whereby she obtained the temporary prefix of a syllable to her title, being called by us un-lucky Lowe, for a week after.

"We had each hired a Scotch man-servant; an article to be procured, then and there, at an easy rate in point of wages. Wine, too, was cheap: port at two, and claret at three shillings a bottle; both excellent; which is much more than could be said of the men-servants. With such an arrangement, our three *valets-de-chambre* in attendance, and our claret, we sat down rather aristocratically; except that we wanted a more spacious *Salle à manger*, and a few silver forks, instead of our steel three-prongers.

"In about a week or ten days, I had got out of

Lucky Lowe's cabin, into my new apartments; which were exactly upon the same plan as those of my new English friends: a small sitting-room, and a light closet to sleep in for myself, with an adjoining room and closet for my servant; these were obtained at so inconsiderable a rate that it did not quite amount to the annual salary of the great President Boetius*. My furniture was all second-hand, and undoubtedly not superb, *videlicet* the inventory.

IN SITTING-ROOM, PAPERED YELLOW, WITH BLUE DOTS.

One Scotch carpet;—Four stained wood chairs, with cane bottoms;—Two elbow ditto, ditto;—One walnut dining-table;—One mahogany Pembroke ditto;—One looking-glass, 2 feet high, 1 wide;—One grate;—One fender, ditto shovel, ditto tongs, ditto poker;—Two dimity window curtains, two Venetian blinds.

IN SLEEPING CLOSET.

One Fir Bedstead, with rough-hewn Posts;—Blue check Curtains to ditto;—One Mattress, ditto Quilt, and two Blankets;—One wooden stool;—One deal board in window place, with round hole in ditto, for wash-hand bason.

IN SERVANT'S APARTMENTS.

One deal claw table;—Two wooden stools;—One bedstead;—One mattress;—One blanket;—One rug;—One poker, for bars in fire-place.

"All this property was reckoned sumptuous by the Aberdeen collegians; and I was rather proud

* Boetius, the celebrated Scottish historian, was the first president of King's College, Aberdeen; his salary was only 2*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.* per annum.

of it, till I sold it by public roup, as they say in Scotland; when, after paying the auctioneer's demands for commission and all attendant expenses, my proceeds amounted to eight pounds, nineteen shillings, and sixpence.

"I must not omit to mention certain chambers on the ground floor of my common staircase, which were pointed out to me as having been very lately quitted by Charles Burney, son of the Musical Doctor Burney, himself afterwards a Doctor of Civil Law, and late master of the celebrated school at Greenwich. In those chambers he had been making his successful and laborious researches, unaided by Scottish professors, in the language of Ancient Greece; here he had shut himself up, not in Ancient Greece, but in Old Aberdeen, for I believe two or three youthful years of his life; secluding himself like a hermit,* not living exactly upon a vegetable-diet, but feeding his mind upon Greek roots, which caused him at last to be reported one of the three best Greek scholars of his time in England.

"The episcopal City of Old Aberdeen has the appearance, says Johnson, of a town in decay. He

* The hermit was, in fact, a *bon vivant;* he took several frisks in the intervals of his seclusion, to Gordon Castle, whither he was invited by the late hospitable Duke of Gordon; and where, I was told, he occasionally tarried so long, that it was hinted to him his bed-room would soon be wanted by some other expected guest. This could only have happened, if it ever happened at all, through want of tact in a very young man; for he was a liberal gentleman, of independent spirit: 'I knew him well, Horatio.'

might rather have said, that it looks like a long dreary village in all the vigour of its original gloom; thinly supplied with inhabitants, and those chiefly of the poorer order. I speak of the place as I found it, eight years after the Doctor.

"The slender claim to admiration which the cathedral, judging from its remains, ever possessed, must have been obtained, I think, by its tumbling down. Ideas of pristine grandeur are too often associated with an ancient building in ruins, and the antiquary is in haste to extol the fragments of any old church which time has crumbled, tempests have shattered, or human violence has dilapidated. The edifice above-mentioned, commonly called St. Machar's, is said to have suffered much at the Reformation, and more after the Revolution.

"I doubt whether Doctor Johnson be right in his conjecture, when he supposes that the Old and New Towns are governed by the same magistrates. At all events, during my residence in King's College, there was a very worthy old gentleman, living in the Old Town, who wore a gold chain round his neck, and whom I always understood to be the Provost. This was Mr. Maclean, the Laird of Col, one of those Scotch Western Islands, called the Hebrides.* I met him at dinner, in a mixed party, soon after my arrival in North Britain, when I had every thing to learn which

* He was, for several years, an inhabitant of Old Aberdeen, leaving his son (a captain who had served for some time in the East Indies) to govern his Hebridian territory.

appertains to the manners and etiquette of the inhabitants; and, observing that marked attention was paid to this ancient chieftain, I was desirous of getting into his good graces. Every body at table addressed him as 'Col,' which appeared to me a familiarity inconsistent with respect; but, concluding that they were all his old friends, while I was a stranger, I said to him, 'Mr. Col, will you do me the honour to drink a glass of wine with me?' He stared me full in the face, without speaking, or even deigning to give me a nod of assent. I repeated my proposition; 'Mr. Col, do me the honour, etc.' Mr. Col maintained his silence, and did not move a muscle. 'Is he deaf?' said I, turning to a gentleman on my right hand, 'or what is the matter with him?' 'Gude troth,' he whispered, 'ye've e'en affronted him, by ca'ing him Mister:' he then explained to me that a chieftain in the Hebrides, being looked upon as a kind of petty sovereign, is always styled according to the appellation of his dominions. If, therefore, by possibility, Clapham Common could be a Western Island of Scotland, and Mr. Maclean had been the laird of it, I ought not to have called him Mr. Clapham Common, but Clapham Common, short and blunt, without any prefix or addition whatever, just as in Shakspeare's Play, Cleopatra is occasionally called, both by Mark Antony and her attendants, Egypt.

"This custom is now and then awkward, when the uncouth names given to some of the aforesaid Western Isles are considered; and a well-bred

Englishman, in accosting Scottish petty kings, feels some difficulty in pronouncing, by way of a respectful salutation, 'How do you do, Muck?'*

"Neither are Egg and Rum very lofty titles, but then, there is Mull; and when these three are mentioned together, they produce combined recollections in a Londoner who has travelled the North Road, particularly in winter, of a hot beverage comfortable to the stomach, though not grand to the mind. Sky, also excites no vast idea of landed property, nor any deep deference to the autocracy of a terrestrial proprietor.

"I hastened to repair my error, as soon as I was aware of it, and attacked the chieftain for a third time, with 'Col, allow me to hob-nob with you.' 'With all the pleasure in life, young gentleman,' roared the mighty Col, relaxing his features, and with a Highland accent, which struck me as first-cousin to the Irish brogue: and thenceforward was the Old King Col most condescending, and even attentive, to the Younger Colman. I once sent to him, late at night, when I was laid up by a fever, for a little Lisbon wine, of which I could get none in the town, and which had been prescribed to me, as the best to be taken in whey; my servant returned to me with a bottle of it, and, with the Chieftain's compliments, expressing his regret that he had but

* On reference to authorities, I find that the laird of this place, thinking the appellation too coarse for his island, likes it still less for himself, and he is therefore addressed by the title of Isle of Muck. I cannot help thinking that this title is not less coarse, but more ludicrous.

two dozen more, which should all be sent to me early in the morning, and he hoped it would do me good. This little trait of generous kindness, characteristic, I believe, of Highland chiefs, even in the rude times of their ferocity, had an Uncle Tobyism about it, which speaks much more home to the human heart than all the 'obliging inquiries' with which invalids are flattered in London. Having no need of the proffered present, I did not accept it, but I was not the less grateful.

"That persons above the level of general society should be tenacious of their rank and titles is natural enough; and without similar feelings in every class of civilized men, according to their graduated stations, we should soon have to deplore that

> 'The Falcon, towering in his pride of place,
> Was by the mousing Owl, hawk'd at and kill'd.'

"King's College boasts a very good library, to which I was allowed free access; and was most liberally permitted to take books from it, into my own apartments, upon the promise of returning them undamaged, in a reasonable time. Availing myself of this privilege, I pored over many volumes, laboured at Latin and Greek, and hammered at classics, whom at first, I feared, I should never understand. But here I discovered, that however idly a boy may have rubbed through a public school, he leaves it with more rudimental knowledge sticking to him than he is aware of; and without this, I could not have entered upon the course of private reading which I had undertaken; it is impossible for a solitary adventurer to navigate the dead sea of

languages, unprovided with the rudder and compass of syntax and grammar.

"By devoting two or three hours every day to such literary pursuit, during the chief part of my stay in Scotland, and by continuing the same practice for some years afterwards in London, I more than made up my time lost at Westminster and Oxford; and, on comparing the extreme indolence of my earlier days with my subsequent industry, it looks as if I had gone to those last mentioned seats of erudition not to learn what they profess to teach, but to learn just as much as might enable me to teach myself.

"The remission of discipline in King's College, where I had dreaded the utmost severity, was extreme: indeed towards a young Englishman there was no discipline at all. At the commencement of Term, an acute frosty-faced little Doctor Dunbar, a man of much erudition and great good-nature, told me, instead of saying I was placed in the class over which he presided, that he hoped for the pleasure of seeing me at his *lactures*. 'On what may you lecture, sir?' said I to the Doctor. 'Greek,' he answered, 'and mathematics.' I declared mathematics to be my utter aversion, and that I never could endure them at Oxford. 'Hoot! hoot' said the little Doctor, 'gin ye come ainee to my *lacture*, ye'll find me mak' mathematics sae entertaining, that ye'll nae be able to keep awa'.' I did attend this worthy man for a few mornings, when he addressed himself pointedly to me, in preference to all the other students, and then I totally deserted him.

"He afterwards invited me to breakfast with him, when he mildly asked me why I had absented myself from his class. I said, carelessly, in reference to his promise of entertainment, that he had not kept his word with me.

"The complacent smile with which this very impudent speech was received, and the complete toleration of my insubordinate conduct, for which I should have been expelled at Christ Church, sufficiently show how much my father had been misinformed when he sent me to King's College as to an academical Penitentiary: its doleful location, however, was in itself a punishment; my sense of which I always expressed to him, in my letters, by three large notes of admiration, after the date of place: as thus:

"ABERDEEN!!!"

"In respect to Professor Roderick Macleod, as my quarterly allowance came through his hands, I visited him frequently; not only to receive my payments, but sometimes to procure an advance, and sometimes, soon after my arrival in Scotland, to consult him upon matters of expenditure, chiefly the purchase of apparel; in which he always was ready to be my agent, and chuckled when he heard I had nicknamed him the 'Professor of Economy.'

"However irreverent this appellation from pupil towards tutor, certain it is, that honest Rory never dreamed of teaching me anything but how to live within my income; a science for which I had no more genius than for mathematics, and I failed as much in observing his darling maxim of 'a baubee saved is a baubee got,' as in surmounting Euclid's

problem called the Pons Asininus. But Rory was not in fact pure in his elements, he confounded shabbiness with thrift, and was for sacrificing comfort and cleanliness to frugality. He advised me for instance, and advised in vain, to wear linen coarse enough to rub off my skin, and to change it only twice, or at the utmost three times a week. In opposition to this system, I appealed so strongly to his gentlemanly pride or shame, that he actually admitted it would be better if those parts of a shirt which are most exposed to view consisted of finer materials than the rest.

"There is no accounting for the inconsistencies of mankind! Who could imagine that old Rory Macleod, in the teeth of all his habits and professions, and on the verge of three score, would have fallen into the extravagance of taking to his parsimonious bosom a young wife? Yet so it happened, yea, happened while he had three lads under his care, myself, and my young friends Perkins and Earle, to keep his doctrines alive in his mind, by giving him most abundant occasion for the exercise of his economical precepts: and, then, there were 'rings, and things, and rich array,' to be purchased for the bonny bride. The Sacrist of the College Chapel, who liquored his boots, rubbed down his Highland pony, and thrashed his walnut tree, was to be superseded by a gawky in a green jacket, and a red cape, who smeared whatever he touched, and broke a world of glass and crockery; in addition to Mause, who had, for five and twenty years, made her master's bed, and his barley-broth, and had been his maid of

all work, a *femme de chambre* was to be hired, to wait on young Mrs. Professor Macleod; then the house must be new painted, and worst rub of all! partly new furnished; the bridegroom's wardrobe, too, besides a new suit for the wedding, was to undergo a thorough scouring, that he might look gallant and gay, at least during the honey-moon. I say nothing of the laugh among his neighbours, which was all at his expense.

"On the day preceding the nuptials, some wag, a rare commodity in that part of the world, sent him the following three lines from Chaucer's January and May—

> Aviseth you, ye ben a man of age,
> How that ye entren into marriage,
> And namely with a young wif and a faire.

"But he defied squibs—he had anticipated the gossips' talk, and said it would only be 'a nine days' wonder. Yet, in such a retired nook as Old Aberdeen, where population is scanty, and food for tittle-tattle is scarce, Rory furnished the *gude-folk* with wonder for much more than nine days. At the end of nine months, indeed, his marriage was not eventful enough to protract their amazement.

"Finding myself emancipated from all College duties, I had no further occasion for the scholastic gown which had been made up for my attendance at lectures, and which I had only worn five or six times: it was of the same cut and colour as those of all the Scotch students, though vastly superior in texture and amplitude, being a large cloak of superfine scarlet cloth, like the *red roquelaure* of an old

gentleman in former days. I had profited so far by old Rory's lessons, as to think that this splendid toga should not be entirely thrown away; I, therefore, ordered it to be metamorphosed into a coat of the newest London fashion known to a north-British tailor; and persuaded my two young English companions, who had similar cloaks, similarly thrown by, to follow my example. In these fiery habiliments, we took our morning walks to New Aberdeen, to parade backwards and forwards on a wide square surface, in the centre of the town, called the Plain Stones; a kind of uncovered exchange, where

'Merchants most do congregate;'

appearing as we wore unsportsmanlike cocked hats, with our red coats, like three mad members of a hunt, to the astonishment of all the sober citizens.

"There was no mighty moral turpitude in this, but it exposed the laxity of government in King's College, when English boys were suffered to abandon their studies, and misuse their academical garb. It was also a piece of coxcombry, originating no doubt in myself, glaringly out of place in the midst of a commercial and corporate town; and particularly ill-timed, after I had recently received a very flattering mark of attention from the chief magistrate: for, be it recorded, that, I had scarcely been a week in Old Aberdeen, when the Lord Provost of the New Town invited me to drink wine with him one evening in the Town Hall: there I found a numerous company assembled, and, taking my seat at a long table, was wedged in between two officers of a fencible regiment; a novel situation, which appeared

to me very awkward, as those gallant gentlemen were in the Highland costume, which disdains a part of male dress indispensable in every society to which I had previously been accustomed. The object of this meeting was soon declared to me by the Lord Provost, who drank my health, and presented me with the freedom of the city. My countrymen, Messrs. Earle and Perkins, who had arrived in Scotland several months before me, had already experienced this civic courtesy. Bestowing upon three such raw subjects the same honour which had been conferred upon the celebrated Johnson, as a tribute to his learning, genius, and morality,* can only be considered as an intended compliment to the English in general; it could not possibly have arisen from respect for any meritorious qualities in the youthful individuals.

"The adoption of so remarkable a uniform as that which I have described, by three English students in a Scotch College, procured for us more notoriety than reputation; and our frequent tavern dinners in the New Town, while at a dead weekly expense for Lucky Lowe's cookery in our rooms, had the same tendency. On our return homewards,

* "On Monday we were invited to the Town-Hall, where I had the freedom of the city given me by the Lord Provost. The honour conferred had all the decorations that politeness could add, and what I am afraid I should not have had to say of any city south of the Tweed, I found no petty officer bowing for a fee. The parchment containing the record of admission is, with the seal appending, fastened to a riband, and worn for one day by the new citizen in his hat."—*Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland.*

too, from those dinners, we had been several times annoyed by a party of choice spirits, who paraded streets at nights, upon principles more liberal than those of the patrol; for, instead of receiving pay, as a half efficient guard to the timorous passenger, they generally quieted all his fears at once, without fee or reward, by knocking him down, and leaving him senseless on the ground.

"This knot of ruffians, who had become a nocturnal terror, like the Mohocks whom we read of in the Spectator, we were determined to chastise, and, if we could, entirely suppress, for this purpose we often marched from our College at midnight, and proceeded to the New Town, attended by our servants, thus making six in number, all armed with bludgeons, to retaliate upon our aggressors. This act of ultra-justice, which increased the disturbances it pretended to put down, brought us into still further disrepute; and, I know not how it was, whether from making more bluster, or having more animal spirits than my companions, but so it happened that I was always considered the ringleader in these quixotical sallies; insomuch that I became pointed at by the lower order of Aberdeenites, who distinguished me by the appellation of the Muckle De'il, Anglicè the Great Devil.

"Three months of my sojournment were not over, when the morning walk, southward, to loiter in the New Town, or northward, to look over the Brig of Don,* grew wearisome in the extreme; this

* The bridge at Old Aberdeen, a little way out of the town,

routine, therefore, was occasionally broken by excursions on horseback in company with my two brother Englishmen, when none but boys could find pleasure in galloping over a Scotch road, in a Scotch winter.

" In one of these rides or rather slides, for it was at the end of January, and the highways were one sheet of ice; we put up for the night at Laurence Kirk, which I have already mentioned, in my route from London. Here the album lay upon the table, inviting us to write therein, also, did the wretched prose and verse of many a previous traveller encourage me to scribble, and therein did I deposit, upon a profaned altar, in a Scottish inn, my virgin offering to the Muse.

" This maiden effort, a ballad, was a contemptible piece of doggerel, and, what is much worse, an attempt to ridicule the hospitable nation which, always excepting the mob of Aberdeen, had shown me kindness; a nation for which I have, now, a very great respect; but a minor wag, as I was then, in every sense of the word, sacrifices everything for what he thinks a joke.

" Bad, however, as my verses were, even one of the country which they libelled had good-nature and generosity enough, in the midst of his indignation, to bestow upon them a kind of praise: for on a subsequent visit to Laurence Kirk, I found, under

over the Don, is one immense arch of stone, sprung from two rocks, one on each side, which serve as a butment to the arch; so that it may be said to have a foundation coeval with nature, and which will last as long.

my lines, the following distich, evidently written by a North Briton :—

> ' I like thy wit—but, could I see thy face,
> I'd claw it well, for Scotia's vile disgrace.'

to which I subjoined,

> ' Is, then, a Scotchman such a clawing elf?
> I thought he scratch'd no creature but himself!'

" My disposition to scribbling would have shown itself, I suppose, at all events sooner or later; but the album, coming thus early in my way, acted as a hot-bed upon my inert propensities, which, once roused into life, continued to germinate; consequently my earliest productions were premature, and, like forced asparagus, excessively weak.

" Finding that I could tag rhymes, of which I was not quite sure till I had tried, I sat down immediately on my return from Laurence Kirk, to write a poem ; but I had the same want as a great genius,* not, then, I believe, born, and since dead. *I wanted a hero*—the first at hand. I found him in the last newspaper, lying on my table, which had arrived from London, was the renowned orator and statesman, Charles James Fox, who was then termed, in all Whig publications, ' The Man of the People.'

" I accordingly gave the same title to my poem ; knowing little more of politics and the man of the people, than of the man in the moon! In one particular of my work, I followed the example of a

* Lord Byron, see the first stanza of Don Juan.

poet, whose style was somewhat different from my own; I allude to one John Milton.

"Milton has, in most people's opinion, taken Satan for the hero of his Paradise Lost; I therefore, made my hero as diabolical as need be, blackening the Right Honourable Charles James Fox, till I had made him, only in his politics remember, as black as the devil himself; and, to mend the matter, I praised to the skies Lord North, who had lost us America!

"This notable effusion I published, but suppressed my name, at Aberdeen, in a small edition, 'for the author;' the bookseller there, I believe the only one in the town, wisely declining to purchase the copyright; of course he only sold the work by commission, leaving me responsible for the expense of printing.

"A new poem published in this corner of the kingdom was an extraordinary event, and excited some curiosity there. It was thought to contain some smart lines, and was in every body's hands; but, alas! not at all to the author's profit; the Aberdeenites were in general like Rory Macleod, great economists; the prodigal few who had bought my production lent it to their frugal neighbours; who lent it again to others, and the others to others, *ad infinitum;* so that about one hundred copies were thumbed through the town, while all the rest remained clean and uncut upon the shelf of the bibliopolist. He sent me his account, some time afterwards, enclosing the printer's bill, by which it appeared that I was several pounds debtor for the

publication; but then I became sole proprietor of all the unsold copies, which were returned to me; all of which I put into the fire save one, which happened to turn up a few years ago, in looking over old papers; I found it to be downright schoolboy trash, and consigned it to the fate of its predecessors. I hope that there is now no trace of this puerile stuff extant.

"Although the accident of scrawling a song in the Laurence-Kirk Album imperceptibly led me to the press as a versifier, still the twig had been bent in a dramatic direction; and the young tree was mainly inclined to the stage.* My poem, therefore, had scarcely appeared in print, when I had finished a musical farce, which I entitled The Female Dramatist†, and transmitted to my father. It puzzled the managerial papa: he thought it had some promise, but that it was too crude to risk, as regularly accepted by the theatre; so it was brought out anonymously, on the benefit-night of Jewell, the treasurer, August 16, 1782.

"Little is expected from novelties produced at a benefit; and, considering the apathy with which they are usually received, I may without vanity state, that this farce was noticed in a very conspicuous manner, for it was uncommonly hissed in the

* 'Just as the twig is bent, the tree 's inclined.'—Pope.

† The principal character was borrowed from Mrs. Metaphor, in Smollett's Roderic Random. The Theatrical Remembrancer, compiled by Egerton, the bookseller and printer, in 1788, 12mo. erroneously ascribed the Female Dramatist to Mrs. Gardner; an error that has been continued in the last edition of the Biographia Dramatica.—Ed.

course of its performance. The audience, I was told, laughed a good deal in various parts of the piece; but there were passages in it to excite disapprobation; and much too broad to have escaped the erasing hand of the examiner of plays, in the present day. On perusing the manuscript after a long lapse of time, I threw the Female Dramatist into the flames,* as a fit companion for the Man of the People; and if this consumed couple had belonged to any author but myself, he would not perhaps have had the folly, or candour, or whatever else it may be called, to rake up their ashes.

" During all this scribbling, for, undismayed by my failures, such is the *cacoëthes scribendi*, I proceeded from a two act farce to a three act comedy; the devil must be in it if I had much leisure for getting into scrapes, and for breaking the peace, and the windows, of the Aberdeenites; especially as I had taken a fancy not only to write, but to read.

* Colman's recollection as to some matters appears to have been very faulty, or the paper on which he had written was made of the imperishable asbestos, and was not only purified by its transmission through the flames, but had absolutely become a twin phœnix, as among the manuscripts presented to the Duke of Devonshire there were two copies of the Female Dramatist, in the author's autograph.—Ed.

CHAPTER IV.

1781—1782.

Cacoëthes Scribendi—Leith Races—Pedestrian Expedition of George the Younger, from Aberdeen to Edinburgh—Disguise—Adventures on the Road—Montrose—Press Gangs—Frith of Forth—Colman in a Collier—Panorama—Kirkaldy—Leith—Disagreeable Landlady—Colman himself again—Scotch Post-chaise—Return to King's College—Play-writing—The miseries and mishaps thereof—Fatal curiosity—Prologue to Ditto, by the elder Colman, on revival at the Haymarket—Season at the Little Theatre.

"My new habits of reading and writing were not so rigorously observed as to preclude liberal relaxation: and I broke the course of my first twelve months' labours, by indulging in two short visits, of a week each, to Edinburgh. The last of these was in the summer of 1782, during the Leith race-week. The race-ground, if sands can be called ground, was on the shore of the Frith of Forth, the horses were therefore sometimes knee-deep in sand, or water, or both; and those persons who attended the sports there, and no where else, could scarcely be called men of the turf.

"Through a strange whim, the last-mentioned journey was commenced on foot. Many a man sits in his arm-chair reading fictitious adventures by sea and land, associating his fireside solace with the amusing incidents in his book, till he fancies that

nothing is so delightful as to travel and to sail. This romantic feeling is more especially prevalent in our youth, when the mind rarely, if ever, dwells with disquietude upon accounts of the casual mishaps, fatigues, hardships, and inconveniences of peregrination, though charmed with the description of nature's scenery: and my brains, when a schoolboy, had been so deliciously bewildered by Cervantes and Le Sage, to the neglect of Greek and Latin, that I longed to get into Spain, and practically to trace the devious course of Don Quixote and Gil Blas. I was for falling in with shepherds, and swineherds, and goatherds, and damsels upon donkeys, and monks upon mules, and barbers on a tour, and hermits in a grotto. I was for climbing rocks and mountains, dining by a brook, and sleeping under a cork tree; in short, I was for being at least a vagabond, if not a knight-errant.

"With these early sparks in my bosom, which had been kindled almost into a flame, by conversations upon the simple manners of the Scotch peasantry, and the sublime and beautiful of some parts of the country, I determined to sally forth in plebeian guise, and spy the nakedness of the land, most of which, Heaven knows, was naked enough!

"To effect this notable project, it was agreed between me and my friend Earle, with whom I had previously arranged to travel in a post-chaise, that we should meet at Edinburgh, instead of going thither together; he to bring my requisite apparel, in his travelling trunk, to the appointed place of meeting, while I should start as a pedestrian, to perform the exploit, exactly in a week, with only a

one pound note in my pocket. I was to be attended, or rather accompanied, by my servant, carrying a wallet, furnished with some clean shirts; the said servant to behave as my comrade, whenever we came in contact with observers. The said servant, by the by, after this expedition, turned out an 'exceeding knave.'

"I began my march at ten o'clock, on a beautiful moonlight night, in the middle of summer; my man Geordy, as he was called, trudging beside me. We were dressed in coarse jackets, Scotch bonnets, fillibegs, and tartan hose, and were to have had furloughs from an officer of a fencible regiment, in order to pass for soldiers who had obtained leave of absence, and were going Southward in their own clothes, to see some friends in the Scottish metropolis; but when we were many miles on our way, I found that Geordy had neglected to obtain the said furloughs; which, as it happened, was a matter of some importance.*

"We tramped over the rugged horrors of a road, part of which I have already described, in my journey from London; and accomplished full sixteen miles from Old Aberdeen, without stopping, except for five minutes, at a mean road-side tenement, where post-boys and waggoners watered their horses, and whyskied themselves. It was open at all seasons, in all hours; and, as I was given to understand, most crowded with customers at mid-

* I believe we could not have worn the dress above described, unless under the pretence of belonging to the Scottish regiments; the old highland costume, for the peasantry, having been abolished.

night. Its only room for all comers had a mud floor, some broken chairs, a tottering long table, and a winking lamp, boasting greater stench than illumination, nailed against the smoke-dried wall, which had once been whitewashed. This place was filled with a company resembling the marauders of Salvator Rosa much more than the boors of Teniers; some half drunk, others quite so, others vigilant, as if in expectation of prey. I thought then, as I think now, that, if the gentry whom I encountered there had suspected me to be worth robbing, they would, perhaps, have cut my throat; the surrounding country was particularly convenient for throwing a breathless body into a morass, and preventing all random records of the transaction. Such was the first specimen afforded me of those innocent swains whom I had ardently expected to find, in rambling over a Scottish Arcadia.

" On reaching Stonehive, between three and four o'clock in the morning, I avoided the Mill, where I was known, the best inn, by far, in the place, though bad was the best; and hied me to a house more unpretending in point of customers, but accounted greatly superior in dirt and discomfort. Here I was very desirous of procuring a bed, for, I was not merely tired by the length of the way, but fevered with pain from the coarse texture of the tartan hose, and a pair of thick new shoes, which had so excoriated and swollen my feet, that every step I took was torture.

" I was not, however, admitted into the last mentioned place of lowly resort. It was, indeed, broad day, but in a season when there is scarcely

any night, and at such an hour of quiet, that every portal in this obscure little maritime town was closed. I sat down upon a stone bench, outside of the Thistle, or the Jenny Cameron, or the Wallace's Head, or whatever might have been the sign; not at all smiling like Patience on a monument, and, in about a quarter of an hour, resumed my weary way.

"From Stonehive, I abandoned the interior route to Edinburgh, through Forfar and Perth, by which I had travelled when I first came from London; and pursued the road which is nearer to the coast.

"Six miles beyond Stonehive, about two-thirds of the way from that place to Bervie, on the road to Montrose, we came to an inn standing by itself; and, if an inn were merely the word by which an inn is expressed, I should have pronounced it to be as forlorn a noun substantive as a tired gentleman could hit upon in a summer's morning. It was called 'The Temple,' and had not been converted into such a den of thieves as I first entered, and have described. Here, as it was six o'clock, A. M., and the people of the house all stirring, I at last obtained repose.

"Some philosophers doubt whether the greatest of all corporal pleasure be not immediate mitigation of violent pain. I am not prepared to solve so nice a problem, but I should readily have given into their persuasion when, with aching limbs, and throbbing feet, I threw myself upon as hard a flock bed as ever could have been pressed, even by the weight of a travelling tinker.

"I arose at noon, much less punished as to body and joints in general, than I had expected; but a

foundered pedestrian cannot sleep off his lameness in the short space of six hours; and he who has happened to see a Turk under the bastinado, or a trooper standing on the picket, may form some notion of my sensations when, after having once more pulled on the horrible tartan hose, and crammed my lower extremities into the tight shoes, I recommenced my toilsome journey.

"As to my man Geordy, who had, before he entered into my service, trudged the highlands, his callous feet were little more susceptible of feeling than the claws of a dining-table.

"There was a distance of rather more than fifteen miles from the Temple to Montrose, which town it was my determination to reach, though at a cripple's pace, in the evening.

"I sat out about one o'clock P. M., in much misery, getting easier as I went on, by getting warmer, like a battered post-horse; not halting at Bervie, but halting through it, nor stopping at any house of entertainment for travellers. Occasionally we walked up to some cottage door, where the gude wife, who staid at home while her gude man was labouring in the field, would give us whey or butter-milk, and offer us oaten cakes, or whatever else the humble dwelling could afford. This hospitable custom I found to be universal among the Scottish peasantry, at least as well as I could judge in my week's wild excursion, and was one out of very few instances to realize the nonsensical notions which I had derived from a taste for the *beau idéal* of pastoral romance.

"About four o'clock in the afternoon, we came

to a brook which crossed the road, and was not then much above ancle deep; it was surmounted by a slight bridge.

" Tempted by a green field, and urged by a craving appetite, I sat me down near the margin of this rivulet, on a spot a little removed from the high-way, to dine under a stone-hedge.

" Geordy opened his wallet, and produced from it some cold ribs of lamb, a little salt screwed up in a bit of brown paper, and a small loaf of home-made bread, all purchased at the Temple. These luxuries he placed upon a white napkin, which he had spread upon the turf.

" As the grass served me both for chair and dining-table, I dispensed with the dignity of a servant waiting behind me, and even invited him to the sitting; at which he so far outdid me in making a voracious repast, that when I told him to take away, there was nothing left but the bare bones of the lamb, and a little of the salt.

" I travelled, be it remembered, with a convenient apparatus, a *multum in parvo*, containing, besides a knife, fork, and spoon, a small case bottle and a tumbler, so that I washed down my repast with some excellent brandy, diluted with water from the brook. This beverage, of which I took several tumblers, but indeed, dear temperate reader, they were very small ones, so refreshed and cheered me, *pro tempore*, that I began to doubt whether I was an ass or not, for having placed myself in such a situation.

" Spite of lameness, rough roads, high hills, and hot weather, I performed my intended fifteen miles,

from the Temple, at the rate of two miles and a half an hour, as to actual progress; to which must be added about an hour and a half more, passed in loitering at cottages, and dining *allo scoperto;* and the sun had set, after a sultry summer's day, when we entered the neat and cheerful town of Montrose. This seaport, of some consideration, is situated on the east side of the shire of Angus, upon the coast of the German Ocean, and at the mouth of the river South Esk, which constitutes its harbour. It contains some well-built houses, a town-hall, and an hospital for the poor; notwithstanding which last, it is at this place that Doctor Johnson observes, 'there are many beggars in Scotland.'

"It was not for foot-passengers in fillibegs to strut into the first-rate inns, of which there were two in Montrose, and call about them; no traveller under the dignity of an equestrian, from a commercial firm, trotting about the country upon a horse caparisoned with saddle-bags full of samples, ever frequented these hostelries, as Chaucer calls Inns of of a superior order; we therefore sought more humble accommodation; and in passing through a wynd, or side lane at the back of the main street, we observed an elderly woman who stood at the door of her lonely habitation to enjoy the freshness of the evening air. On a pane of her cottage window, in a line with the door, she had pasted a paper which announced a room to let; there was still sufficient twilight to read the inscription, and it induced me to ask her whether she could give us a night's lodging; telling her, at the same time, our ready-made story, that we were soldiers on leave of

absence, to visit our friends in Edinburgh; and adding the plain truth, that I had fallen lame on the journey.

"After a homely supper of new laid eggs and bacon, the good woman told us that she had a bed for me, and another for Geordy, in the spence. The spence, as it is termed, in Scotland, is a back parlour, generally so confined in its dimensions, as was the case in the present instance, that a stranger wonders, not at its holding two beds, but how it can hold one*. This is soon explained by pulling back sliding panels in the wainscot, or sometimes opening folding doors, behind which there are beds in recesses, looking like those constructed in small packet-boats, where passengers are stowed for the night.

"How uncertain are the events of human life! The odds were a million to one, when I got up from table in the but, to go to bed in the ben, that I should have gone to bed as I intended: I did no such thing, for, in proceeding to execute my resolves, I felt so thoroughly crippled that I declared the impracticability of continuing the journey on foot, next morning; and, therefore, I speculated, Montrose being a sea-port, upon getting some conveyance in a vessel which would land us near Edinburgh. My servant, to whom I half addressed this, as a seeming proposition to a fellow-traveller, of course gave his assent to the plan.

"'A weel,' said the widow, 'ye'll easy procure

* The ground-floor of a great number of houses, in Scotland, consists of a kitchen in front, and the spence, or parlour, at the back of it, in which last the provisions are often kept. These two apartments are contra-distinguished as the but and ben.

a passage i' the morn; for ye're baith Sogers, ye ken, and need na fash yoursels aboot the king's cutter i' the harbour.' She then explained to us that this same cutter had been, for three days, and was still, lying within the mouth of the South Esk, manned by a press-gang, under the command of a lieutenant; a formidable piece of intelligence, which made me instantly and anxiously inquire of Geordy what he had done with our furloughs; when it appeared, to our utter dismay, that the careless scoundrel had never troubled his head about them; and had started with me, from Aberdeen, without calling on the officer who had promised to furnish them. Here was a dilemma! The pretended soldiers were likely to be forced into real service, as sailors; and the probable transition from King's College to a king's ship, in order to fight, at so short a notice, His Majesty's battles against the Mounseers, the Mynheers, and the Dons, for we were, then, if I recollect right, at war with France, Holland, and Spain, appeared to me much more awkward, as a personal revolution, than my projected banishment from Aberdeen to London. In the latter instance, I should have only been thrown back upon my father's hands, who would have been in a furious rage with me; but, between a banished son and a vanished son, there is a wide difference in a father's feelings; and had I been hurried on board a man-of-war, my disconsolate parent must have accounted for my disappearance by supposing me smothered in a Scotch quagmire: as the times were gone by for being whisked away upon a broomstick, by one of Macbeth's witches.

"If I had fallen in with the rawhead-and-bloody-bones lieutenant, his cutlass in hand, and his crew at his back, there can be little or no doubt that he would have handed me over, *sans ceremonie*, to his superior officer on board some frigate, and that I should have been for a long time 'missing;' for how was I to prove to them, at the moment, or induce them to take the trouble of investigating, so improbable a tale, although it was a fact, that two apparently common Highlanders were an English gentleman and his servant, taking a week's walk together, in masquerade, with a one pound note between them?

"Luckily, the widow recollected that a vessel which had been unlading a freight of coals was to sail, on its return to the Frith of Forth, as soon as the morning tide would serve; so she hastened down to the harbour, and told us, when she came back, that one of the two men who navigated the collier was her relation; that he would take us on board at midnight, under his own particular guardianship, victual us during the day, and land us next evening at Kirkaldy, which is on the north side of the Frith, nearly opposite to Leith:

"When the town clock had struck twelve, she conducted us to the harbour, walking some paces before us, as a scout, to give the alarm in case of danger. But her precaution, as it happened, was redundant; for the moon was down, and 'not a mouse stirring.' On reaching a boat in which a boy was waiting, to row us to the ship, she wished us both a prosperous voyage.

"The exterior of the two men who received us on

board was in admirable harmony, as well as I could then see, with the dingy appearance of the collier; and no sooner had we embarked than the widow's relation, in the redundancy of his inflictive beneficence, ordered us under hatches, for our better security. I petitioned him to postpone this stifling act of kindness, as there was not yet light enough to fear that we should be discovered; and, in such a vessel, I anticipated descending into something like a coal-hole; but, no; he had promised that we should not be pressed; he was a loving monster, so down he crammed us. The place was as I expected, hot, small, noisome, and as dark as pitch; here, however, I obtained a sound sleep of more than five hours, in my clothes, upon some packages which lay on the floor; after which I was awakened, about six o'clock in the morning, by heaving the anchor; and soon perceived, from the ship's motion, that we were in progress down the river.

"By my order, Geordy mounted a short ladder, lifted up a trap-door, and then thrust his head through the aperture, at the top of our floating dungeon, to ascertain how far we had advanced, when he received so astounding a shock upon his pate, from the iron hand of our guardian, upon deck, that it tumbled him back again, into the shades below.

'It had been so with us, had we been there;'

but I had, by chance, told Geordy to reconnoitre just at the crisis when we were passing the dreaded King's cutter, at the mouth of the South Esk; and the protecting sea-bear, who laid him low, must have had no little anxiety on our account, if his care for

our persons might be appreciated by the power of his paw.

" Having got out of the port, without let or molestation, and been nearly an hour on the open sea, where there was no appearance of any ship of war, caution itself could be no longer apprehensive : our tutelary coal-heaver, therefore, permitted us to quit our durance, *superasque evadere ad auras.* As we creeped up the ladder, out of darkness, upon deck, the scene which burst upon us, or rather, our bursting upon the scene, was extremely exhilarating, and more so from the suddeness of the contrast.

" Sun-beams danced gaily upon the waves, which a north-west breeze had put into active, but not turbulent, motion. Our canvas was all spread, and we were going merrily under a steady and favourable wind ; the waters were dotted with trading vessels ; the German ocean, in which we were sailing, was bounded, on our left, by nothing but the horizon ; while on our right lay the land, which is always, to an inhabitant of it, a cheering ingredient in a marine prospect.

" During the first half of the voyage, we sailed due south, keeping the shires of Angus and Fife constantly in sight ; which exhibited, as we coasted along their eastern borders, a much more effective variety of views, begging the managers' pardon, than any of those shifting candle-light Panoramas painted in distemper, which have been produced at the Drury Lane and Covent Garden Theatres, although the said Panoramas have very great merit. On the line of coast from Montrose to the Forth, we

passed, according to their regular order of succession, the Promontory called Red-Head, a conspicuous object far off at sea; Aberbrothick, famed for its ruins of the greatest abbey in Scotland, with the Grampian Hills at some distance behind them; the Estuary of the Tay, which river Julius Agricola, whom Camden calls the best of Pro-Prætors, under Domitian, the worst of Emperors, made the boundary of the Roman conquests in North Britain; St. Andrews, once an Archiepiscopal See, and the magnificent metropolis of Scotland, now a decayed grass-grown city, with a declining University; these are the chief places worthy of enumeration before we came to Fifeness; whence we changed our course to a western direction, at the opening of the Frith of Forth, which is very picturesque.

"A large mouth is ugly, in most instances; but the mouth of this Frith is more beautiful from being many miles wide. Near the extremities of its opposite shores, lie Crail, Kilrenny, East and West Anstruther, and the harbour of Pittenweem, in Fifeshire, on one side, and the ruins of Tantallon Castle, in East Lothian, on the other. Between these points, several little islands are scattered, the most conspicuous of which are the Isle of May, and the Bass.

"The May is on the northern side of the Frith; is about a mile long, and a quarter of a mile broad; and boasts only one constant inhabitant of the human species, the poor solitary devil who keeps up the nightly fire in the light-house, which light-house, by the by, built in the reign of our Charles the First, might have an inscription upon it, to record the

superstition of the times in which it was erected. The builder, while the work was in progress, was drowned in a storm, as he was returning, one night, to his house in Fife, from the island; for which, *horribile dictu!* some poor old women, after being pronounced guilty of raising the tempest, were condemned to death, and executed!

"Bordered both on the right and left, by a populous country, we sailed up the Forth, till we came, before sunset, to Kirkaldy. Here, as the collier had completed her voyage, I and Geordy were put into a boat, and carried three miles further to Kinghorn: from which place to Leith, on the other side of the Frith, which is here narrowed to seven miles, there is a ferry. In taking leave of our two navigators, I thanked our guardian, in particular, for all his oppressive super-attentions, which had considerably bored and annoyed me.

"On landing, we procured a couple of beds 'in the worst inn's worst room,' and early next morning walked into a barber's shop to be shaved; where I disbursed one penny to the artist who skilfully performed upon me this tonsorial operation. However small my immediate funds, I did not deem the expenditure extravagant, till Geordy's superlative genius for economy threw my notions of thrift completely into shade. He had, during the time I was under the barber's hands, shaved himself; he, therefore, insisted, with greater vehemence than success, that, although he had used the said barber's shaving implements, and materials, a demand upon him for more than half-price, that is, a halfpenny, would be gross extortion.

"While the Caledonian Dicky Gossip was smoothing my chin, he imparted news which made the hairs on my head to stand on end! Pressing, he told me, was going on very briskly in his town; a party on this service had been there on the previous day, another might come to-morrow; the place, he said, was never many days without one, and he was in the habit, lately, of seeing many of his customers taken off, as fast as he could take off their beards; in short, it appeared that there was no safety for us; and that, by coming from Montrose to Kinghorn, we had only illustrated the vulgar adage of the frying-pan and the fire, or the more classical, though equally thread-bare saying, of Scylla and Charybdis.

"What was to be done? Our day's voyage had advanced us much too rapidly on our way. We were within nine miles, seven by water and two by land, of Edinburgh; I could not go thither directly, where I was known to some few, to walk about the Scottish metropolis, habited like young Norval from the Grampian hills; and, till the arrival there of my friend Earle, who had all my clothes in his trunk, I could have no means of changing my dress. There was no way left for us, but to dodge the danger as well as we could, by avoiding the town, and the seashore, seeking the heights in the vicinity of Kinghorn, and strolling for food and lodging to such adjacent farm-houses and villages as were situated inland.

"Loitering thus about the country, for a few days, was such a repose, in comparison with the severe march I had performed on starting from Aberdeen, that I was no longer foot-sore: but,

reposing upon bare hills, beneath a scorching sun, as I sometimes did, for an hour or two at a time, produced an inconvenience which I had not foreseen. The upper portion of my English legs, unaccustomed to that space of Highland nudity which is exhibited between the fillibeg and the tartan hose, was half-broiled by the solar beams, insomuch that the effect was little less annoying than my lameness.

" Since this accident, I never refer to the alarm given after Duncan's murder, in the tragedy of Macbeth, without a tribute of admiration to the good taste of Banquo; who, although himself a Highland General, and, no doubt, inured to all weathers, advises his companions, to ' hide their naked frailties,' which he thinks must ' suffer in exposure.'

" It was time at last to leave the regions in which I had spun out the greater part of the week prescribed for the performance of my journey; and had found refuge, also, from those salt-water subalterns who illustrate the naval song, of ' Britons never will be slaves,' by forcing men from their homes and families into the sea-service. Towards the close, therefore, of the fifth day from my landing in Fifeshire, having engaged to be at Edinburgh on the morrow, I sent forth Geordy to reconnoitre; and, upon his report that the coast was clear from the enemy, I descended with him from our holds and fastnesses to the water's edge, where we mingled with a crowd of passengers in the Kinghorn ferry-boat, and were landed at Leith, in the dusk, after little more than an hour's sail.

" We took up our quarters, for the night, close to

the Quay, at an inn, or rather public-house, which Mr. Earle's servant happened to recollect, and described, before we left Aberdeen, as the place to which he would bring my clothes on coming to Edinburgh, with his master. The proprietress of this marine mansion, who, though a landlady of Leith, differed only in dialect from a landlady of Wapping, crammed us for the night into a couple of dog-holes which she called bed-chambers: they were closets, with a wretched curtainless flock-bed in each, but with nothing else whatever. On her lighting me to my kennel, I ventured to observe upon the total absence of every article for the purpose of ablution, when, telling me that there was a pump below, and a jack-towel hanging up in the kitchen, for all such 'loons' as I, she banged the door after her, and left me in utter darkness. I was forced, therefore, to creep into bed like persons who came home after the curfew had been tolled, in the unenlightened times of William the Conqueror.

"Next morning, I breakfasted by the kitchen fireside; a situation, as we were then in the month of July, only fit to solace a salamander; but the cooler latitudes of the kitchen were occupied by groupes of seafaring customers. After my breakfast, Geordy drew a comb and curling-tongs from his wallet, and, having procured a little powder and pomatum from a perruquier, who frizzled a trading ship's captain, lodging in the house, began to dress my hair, previously to the expected arrival of my wardrobe.

"This operation proceeded greatly to the astonishment of the amphibious animals then present; who

silently looked on, while the fashionable toupée, the ribbon-bound queue, and the three curls on a side, were all rapidly forming on the head of an itinerant, in a shabby jacket, and a kilt. I certainly must have presented a very heterogenous figure. Just as the grand work was completed, and I was *bien poudré*, the landlady entered, and stood aghast; at that moment, too, Earle's servant drove up to the door, in the post-chaise which had brought his master to Edinburgh. Geordy then thought fit to proclaim who and what I was, and to add, that I had been roaming over the country for a wager.

" The declaration of my being a gentleman, supported by the evidence of wearing a powdered pate, savoured of the discovery so often practised upon the stage, when a disguised hero suddenly unbuttons his surtout, and proves he is a great man by showing a very fine waistcoat.* The effect on mine hostess was prodigious! She hurried me into the room behind the bar, whither my clothes had been carried, that I might finish my toilette there; and after producing a wash-hand bason, jug of water,

* Sheridan has ridiculed this absurdity in his farce of ' The Critic,' by making the supposed Yeoman of the Guard throw off his dress, and exclaim ' Am I a Beef-Eater now?' The usual wording of directions in play books, upon such occasions, is ' discovers himself;' but this is vague and puzzling for the actor, as many of the directions are. I have heard of an old play where a miser repents, in dumb show, of his sordid disposition, at the end of the fifth act; and it is set forth in a marginal note, that he ' leans against the wall, and grows generous.' I know not by what device the performer could indicate such a mental revolution to the audience, unless by giving the wall to the first comer.

&c., she unlocked a chest of drawers, and spread before me napkins in profusions. I told her not to trouble herself, as I knew where to find the jack-towel, and the pump, which set her bobbing and curtseying, and apologising, at a furious rate. 'Oh, your honour,' she said, 'wha wad ha' dreamed o' sic a thing? had I kenn'd that your honour had been your honour,' and then she went on, in a strain of toadyism equal to her previous insolence.*

"Alas! there are, in this wide world, too many likenesses of my landlady! too many mean-minded folks, both in low life and in high, who can only show their respect, or their consequence, by servility and overbearance; and who cringe to those above them, in the same ratio as they are arrogant to their inferiors in rank or fortune.

"My one pound note, with which I started on my adventure, had dwindled to eighteen-pence; but I had arranged that a small supply should accompany my clothes; so I paid an extortinate bill for very scurvy entertainment, and got into the post-chaise; the two servants seated themselves on the bar, in front of the vehicle, while the gentry who had witnessed the beginning of my metamorphosis, in the kitchen, came out to the door, to see me set off, and gave me three cheers at my departure.

"I reached Edinburgh most thoroughly cured of my fancy for the Scotch Pastoral; and, had I been desired to repeat the excursion, I should have felt

* This must have been the original, upon whom George Colman, the younger, in afterdays, founded the character of Mrs. Brulgruddery.

like the unsportsmanlike person once present at a fox-chase, who, on being afterwards asked to go a-hunting, answered 'no, thank you, I have been.'

"When the Leith race-week was over, Earle and I returned to King's College together, in a style partaking both of the aristocratic and the shabby genteel; for we started a couple of outriders, our two servants on horseback, as a dashing escort to our sorry conveyance of a hack chaise and pair.

"Now a hack post-chaise, being in most instances a clattering, whirring, jingling vehicle, whose peculiar qualities consist of inflexible springs, a narrow seat, and a perpendicular back, doors which must be slammed before they are shut, and which fly open again at the first jolt, iron door steps, doubled up inside, swinging against your leg, musty straw under your feet, and a broken glass peep-hole close behind your head, one window out of four, which won't pull up, and another that won't let down, all of them shadeless and cracked, that you may be blinded by the sun, and pelted with the showers; these being its characteristics, who, let me ask, would willingly be boxed up and jumbled about in it, over hill and dale, for hours together? paying fifteen or eighteen-pence per mile, to have his body and bones pummelled, bumped, bruised, dislocated and bedeviled! Look at such a carriage abstractedly, it is an engine of torture, worthy the invention of a Spanish Inquisitor; but take it comparatively; first explore your weary way as I did, from Aberdeen to Edinburgh, as a foot-passenger, and then get into one of these infernal machines, why, Sir, it is a

luxury! at least I found it so; and well, no doubt, was that luxury estimated by the Irish traveller, whose system was evidently built upon bifold practice, before he composed his celebrated distich of

> 'When I'm rich, I ride in chaises,
> When I'm poor, I walk, by Jasus.'

"Shortly after my return to College, I sat down to write my first play; and boy's play I made of it! trusting at the beginning of my fable entirely to chance for a middle and an end. I had no materials for a plot, further than the common place foundation of a marriage projected by parents, contrary to the secret views and wishes of the parties to be united; and which, of course, is to be obviated by the usual series of stratagems, accidents, and equivoques. Alas! what those stratagems were to be, or how the second scene was to be conducted, I had not any idea, while I was writing the first; but having finished the first, I hurried on into the second, with as little forecast about the third; and so on, from scene to scene, spinning out stage business, as it is termed, as I went along, and scribbling at hap-hazard, as humours and conceits might govern, till I came to the conclusion of act one.

"One act completed, enabled me to proceed somewhat less at random, in the two acts to come, by obliging me to consider a little about the means of continuing, and then unravelling, the perplexities I had already created; still I persevered, as to whole acts, in the same want of regular plan which had marked my progress, in respect to scenes; at Christ-

mas, however, I found that I had floundered through two thirds of a three-act piece, which I called a musical comedy, under the title of 'Two to One.'

"In this improvident way I have written all my dramas, which are not founded either on some historical incident, or on some story or anecdote, which I have met with in print; and, of those thus founded, I never made out a scheme of progressive action before I began upon the dialogue.

"The historical incidents to which I have been indebted have, of course, helped me, in some measure, to see my way in the formation of a plot; but they have not been of a nature to furnish me with materials for a whole play; no more have the fictitious stories, except one;* so that even when I have borrowed a little, I have coined a great deal; and have coined, to use a common phrase, off-hand.

"It is out of my power to ascertain in what manner all poets buckle to their task; but if Bayes's question of 'how do you do when you write?' were put to every living Dramatist, I doubt whether any two of them would answer alike; at all events, I presume to think that not one of them goes into training for the undertaking after Bayes's own original receipt; 'If,' says he, 'I am to write familiar things, I make use of stewed prunes only; but, when I have a grand design in hand, I ever take physic, and let blood.'

"Æschylus, we are told, took a directly opposite course, drinking deep before he could flash his

* Godwin's 'Things as they are; or, the Adventures of Caleb Williams.' This novel, best known by its second title, is the original of the play of the *Iron Chest*.

poetical fires, or thunder his dithyrambics; his style was in consequence so very vehement, that Aristophanes called him a mad bull, and Sophocles said of him, but he was a rival, remember, that his tragedies were produced by the wine, and not by the poet. I know not whether any modern bards may follow the bibacious Grecian's example, but certainly some of them indulge in flights which are none of the soberest; while several, on the other hand, if they be water-drinkers, have resorted to Hippocrene less than to any other fountain, for their potations.

"I have heard of an indefatigable author whose method was to write five-and-twenty acts, and then to reduce them to five, by paring down his exuberances;* of another, who so matured his plan, that he always wrote his last act first; and of a third, who was so plagued and puzzled in making *denouements*, that he was for abolishing the last acts of plays, altogether. Various, indubitably, are the modes of going to work upon a theatrical entertainment; but, if I were to start afresh, as a dramatist, *quod Dii avertant!* I would so far profit from experience as to abide by the few following resolutions—

"First, To draw up a prospectus of the story and the stage business, previously to beginning to write the play. This I believe to be the practice of most authors. My father made an outline, of the above kind, for the comedy of the *Clandestine Marriage*, under three different heads; namely, Idea of Principal Characters; Rough Draught of the General Scheme; and Loose Hints of Acts and Scenes.†

* Cumberland.

† Vide page 162, Vol. I.

" Secondly, To avoid much precision, and detail, in the prospectus ; for, by filling up the outline too minutely, there is danger of fettering fancy, and checking further invention, while writing the play. When an author is contented with what he has specifically set down for himself to do, he is less likely to warm with the subject as he proceeds : it is natural for him to go plodding on, without eliciting such new matter as is sometimes happily produced from the spur of the moment.

" Thirdly, In choosing to strike out a drama from some historical fact, or ready-made tale of fiction, always to select a short and single one ; by single, I mean free from complications. A scanty subject, which requires to be amplified, both stimulates the imagination, and gives it elbow-room : hence new characters are engrafted upon the original stock, new incidents grow out of the appropriated ground ; and the Dramatist obtains greater credit when his own creative muse has assisted in laying out a patch taken from the Common.

" Fourthly, Which is a kind of corollary from the third resolution, as, indeed, the third is a branch from the second : never to dramatize a novel of two or three volumes ; there is so much to reject for want of room, yet so much to compress which cannot be left out, that the original is mutilated, while the copy is encumbered.

" The novel-writer and dramatist arrive at the same point by two different roads ; and that mode of conducting a story which is a help to the first, is a hinderance to the latter ; the first interests you,

by expanding his matter; the latter wearies you, if he do not condense it. Minuteness of detail, and a slow development of the main characters and events, by previous narration, and foregoing occurrences, heighten the effects of a Novel: a Play must plunge *in medias res;* must avoid, or at all events curtail, narratives as much as possible; must bring forward its *dramatis personæ* with little or no preparation, and keep attention alive by brevity of dialogue, and rapidity of action.

"As to the generality of entertainments which have been manufactured of late from the popular Scotch stories, they can hardly be classed among dramatic writings. These crippled Iliads in a nut-shell are the journeywork of the stage, in which scissors and paste predominate over pen and ink; consisting chiefly of huge passages cut out of the printed books, and fastened in adhesive torture together. They are calculated, however, to please the million, and to be profitable to the trade.

"I hope it will be understood that I do not mean to dogmatize, by laying down rules for others in the foregoing resolutions. They are only intended for myself, in case I should, as I trust I shall not, have any future occasion for them. Were it possible that I could, in the days of my youth, have possessed my present experience, my resolution then would have been, never to write for the stage, if by any other pursuit I can obtain an honest gentleman's livelihood.

"Perhaps this avowal may be called affectation, or ingratitude, or both, since my dramatic attempts

have been generally successful; but few avocations are, in my present opinion, less eligible than that of the Drama. It caught my fancy when I was a boy, for I began not long after nineteen. At first, the very act of scribbling gave me pleasure; and I scribbled away, ignorant of 'the art to blot,' and thoughtless of any danger in submitting my crudities to the critics: the novelty of the thing wore off, and after my amusement became my profession, I soon felt the irksomeness of every task, and contemplated probable vexation in the event of it. When you are labouring for fame, or profit, or for both, and think all the while you are at work, that instead of obtaining either, you may be d——d, it is not pleasant; nor is it agreeable to reflect, that a handful of blockheads may in half-an-hour consign first to disgrace, and then to oblivion, your toil of half-a-year; nay, that your own footman, who is one of what is called 'the town,' can, by paying a shilling, hiss and hoot at your new comedy from beginning to end; and, having broken your night's rest, your judge in the upper gallery goes to sleep in your garret.

"But these considerations apart, I verily think, that the wear and tear upon the nerves, occasioned by dramatic composition, may deduct some years from a man's life. It has been my habit, I know not why, except perhaps that the muse is more propitious after dinner, to write, chiefly, late at night; and when I have grown heated with my subject, it has so chilled my limbs that I have gone to bed as if I had been sitting up to my knees in ice.

"Some few dramatists, however, have told me

that they have always written with such ease and rapidity, that I have been astonished, or indeed, have scarcely believed them; but my wonder and incredulity have generally ceased upon a perusal of these gentlemen's hasty productions.

"After all, success may tickle an author's vanity, but failure sadly mortifies his pride; particularly in writing for the stage, where success and failure are so immediate, and so marked; and, to say the best of it, a dramatist's is a devil of a life!"

The only pieces written by George Colman the elder in 1781 and 1782 were an occasional drama, called Preludio, and a pantomime, under the title of Harlequin Teague.*

On the 29th of June, in the latter year, Lillo's tragedy of Fatal Curiosity was revived, to which Colman wrote the annexed prologue, which was spoken by John Palmer.

"Long since, beneath this humble roof, this play,
Wrought by true English genius, saw the day.
Forth from this humble roof it scarce has stray'd;
In prouder theatres 'twas never play'd.
There you have gap'd and doz'd o'er many a piece,
Patch'd up from France, or stolen from Rome or Greece,
Or made of shreds from Shakespeare's golden fleece.
There scholars, simple nature cast aside,
Have trick'd their heroes out in classic pride;
No scenes, where genuine passion runs to waste,
But all hedg'd in by shrubs of modern taste!
Each tragedy laid out, like garden grounds,
One circling gravel marks its narrow bounds.
Lillo's plantations were of forest growth—
Shakespeare's the same.—Great Nature's hand in both!
Give me a tale, the passions to controul,
'Whose lightest word may harrow up the soul!'

* He was assisted by O'Keefe, in the pantomime.

A magic potion, of charmed drugs commixt,
Where pleasure courts, and horror comes betwixt!
Such are the scenes that we this night renew,
Scenes that your fathers were well pleas'd to view.
Once we half paus'd—and while cold fears prevail,
Strive with faint strokes to soften down the tale;
But soon, attir'd in all its native woes,
The shade of Lillo to our fancy rose:
'Check thy weak hand,' it said, or seem'd to say,
'Nor of its manly vigour rob my play!
From British annals I the story drew,
And British hearts shall feel, and bear it too.
Pity shall move their souls, in spite of rules,
And terror takes no lesson from the schools.
Speak to their bosoms, to their feelings trust,
You'll find their sentence generous and just!'

The seasons were, as usual at the little theatre in the Haymarket, successful.

The following letter was palpably written previously to the publication of Colman's translation of 'Horace's Art of Poetry;' which he dedicated to the learned and celebrated brothers, Joseph and Thomas Warton.

"My Dear Sir, Winton, December 7th, 1782.

"I am really and sincerely obliged to you for giving me a sight of your Art of Poetry, and for the honour you intend doing me in inscribing it to me and my brother. I shall send it to you by a safe hand the middle of next week, and shall take the freedom of an old friend in making some queries—queries only?—about some expressions that you may alter, or not, just as you see good. At Christmas, but not till after January 6, I shall try to call on you, if in town. I was extremely mortified to find you passed through this town without calling on us. Who is the man that attacks my brothers' history so violently—virulently I

should have said? What can possibly make a man so angry on such a subject? All here desire their best compliments.

"I am, dear Sir,

Very faithfully and affectionately yours,

George Colman, Esq. Jos. Warton.
Soho Square."

[From the same.]

"My Dear Sir, Winton, December 11, 1782.

"I hope and trust you will receive your poem safe, as I send it by a safe hand. I sincerely, and without compliment, think it done extremely well, and with the force and freedom of Dryden's manner. I hope you will fully explain your hypothesis."

CHAPTER V.

1783.

George Colman the Younger, solitary—Lyrical Lacquey—Sale of Furniture—Visits Montrose—Quaker Landlord—New Aberdeen—Haunted House—Ghost of a Carpenter—Revisits Edinburgh—George a Master Mason—Returns to London—Decayed Wardrobe—Horace's Art of Poetry—Colman the Elder's Translation—Malone—Dr. Vincent—Horace Walpole—Thomas and Joseph Warton—Dr. Shipley—Vernon Sadleir—Bishop Hinchliffe—Thomas Davies—Re-decoration of Drury Lane, Covent Garden, and Haymarket Theatres—Opening Address—The Election of Managers.

We now resume the narrative of George Colman the Younger, at Aberdeen:

"At the beginning of the year 1783, Mr. Earle migrated from Old Aberdeen to St. Andrews, to remain there with a juvenile friend connected with his family, who had lately become a student in the University of that decayed city, and Mr. Perkins had not long before returned to England.

"I was thus left an extraneous animal, in a crowd of young scholastic Yahoos, as forlorn as a fashionable 'Last Man,' when all belonging to the *beau monde* but himself have quitted London.

"For about a week or ten days, I breakfasted, dined, and supped solitarily in my apartments; and when I walked out for exercise, as I never mixed with the under-graduates of our fraternity, we passed each other in greater silence than the monks

of La Trappe, without so much as that least cheering of all social salutations, '*Memento mori.*'

"Even Geordy, my serving man and fellow pedestrian, who might have broken the silence of my solitude now and then while attending me, was no longer in my pay. I had cashiered him for listening on the outside of my room-door, an amusement in which it seems he indulged whenever any body was conversing with me. This was imparted to me by an informer; one evening, therefore, while *tête à tête* with one of my English friends, I bolted out suddenly, and caught the curious Geordy in the very act, with his ear at the key-hole. After his instantaneous expulsion, a world of his mal-practices came to light, and I found that the knave had been feeding fat * upon me. On Geordy's disgrace I took a good-natured honest lad to succeed him, who was not calculated to become a useful domestic, since 'the gods had made him poetical.' I retained him but a short time, and we parted, I forget precisely when, how, or why. Some years afterwards, I saw him in London, whither he had travelled as a trader I believe, to the Mart of Genius. He published some sonnets and similar prettinesses, with his name to them, in the Newspapers and other fugitive prints, but not proving a second Burns, he has remained in obscurity.

"Retracing my way across the Tweed, or ceasing to be, nominally at least, a student in Old Aberdeen, were measures which I durst not adopt with-

* "I will feed fat the ancient grudge I owe him."
Merchant of Venice.

out the parental permission; but heartily sick of moping alone, I determined on a change of scene; a change which, considering that I was ordered down to live in a College, under the control of a tutor, was effected by means very inconsistent with filial obedience or academic subordination.

"My first object was to march out of my old melancholy quarters: my second, never to march back again. I therefore stripped the walls, and employed an auctioneer to sell off my furniture, of which the reader has already been presented with a catalogue.

"With all the precious drops I could distil from my chairs and tables: that is, with eight pounds, nineteen shillings, and sixpence, a sum rather of the smallest, for all the household effects of a gentleman giving up his establishment, I started for Montrose.

"Little or no ceremony was requisite in apprizing Rory Macleod of my movements; he was used to my excursions, and did not trouble himself or me about their duration; he was sure, at all events, that I should turn up again on quarter-day, or indeed some time before it. As to my becoming so complete a non-resident at the University, I attended no lectures, I observed no rules, if there were any to enforce; my private tutor was little more than my paymaster, and his pupil merely a lodger in a College; therefore, whether I sojourned in one Scotch town or another, *Thebis an Argis*, provided the place were cheap, was of small importance to honest Rory.

"Lucretius gives us four lines to the following purport:

How sweet it is, when snug on shore, to view
A heaving vessel's tempest-driven crew,
Grim Death around them glaring!
Not that 'tis sweet to see poor fellows drown'd,
But vastly pleasant to be safe and sound,
While others are despairing.*

"The poet seems to derive this sentiment from principles of mere self-love, but he might, had he not been an atheistical Epicurean, have traced it to the better source of gratitude to Providence, for sparing us from calamities which are inflicted upon men less fortunate than ourselves. Let the feeling arise as it may, the sensation produced by reviewing scenes of our own discomforts, when those discomforts no longer exist, is in some degree allied to it, though it does not render us suspected of wanting compassion for our neighbours; and this sensation I experienced while travelling in a carriage over the very same ground which I had footed a few months before, in almost as much misery as Hassan crossing the desert.†

"Arrived once more at Montrose, I procured a first floor, comfortably furnished, in the dwelling-house of a small, and strange to say, lively family of Quakers. It stood on the south-east edge of the town, which is on the edge of the Links, which again, are on the edge of the German Ocean; so that, altogether, I edged myself into very good quarters.

* Suave mari magno, turbantibus æquora ventis,
E terrâ magnum alterius spectare laborem;
Non quia vexari quemquam est jucunda voluptas,
Sed, quibus ipse malis careas, quia cernere suave est.
Lib. sec.

† See Collins's Oriental Eclogues.

"Friend Aminadab, my landlord, was a remarkably fat specimen of the Faithful—the Society of Jumpers would never have suited him; but his wife was a spare little woman, who certainly did not look like his better half, and might much more promptly be called 'bone of his bone' than 'flesh of his flesh.' They appeared to have numbered nearly three score years apiece; and had retired from trade upon a competence which made them happy; or if it did not, their countenances belied them; for the husband's ample physiognomy beamed with pleasantness like a harvest moon at the full, while calm content sat smiling on the matronly features of his spouse.

"Children in the humbler ranks of life soon quit their parents, for they must go forth to earn their bread. Whatever, therefore, might have been the brood of this ancient pair of turtles, their nestlings were reared, and had flown, long ago; but the old man and woman employed twa bonnie lasses of their own sect, as maid-servants; who kept the apartments accurately clean; and, when their work was done, enlivened the house, at least I thought so, at the distance of the first floor from the kitchen, by singing Scotch songs and duets to the twirl of their spinning-wheels.

"In short, the inhabitants of the dwelling were as cheerful as the view from their windows. Of course, they adhered to *Thee* and *Thou*, and they were all *brown*, that is in respect to their outward garments. Aminadab wore his broad brimmed beaver, his dame looked very snug in her close cap, and the maids

looked very pretty in theirs; but their manners had not the buckram of Quakerism; there was no ostentation of formality or sedateness; and above all, they were vastly obliging and attentive to the first-floor lodger.

"I had brought nothing with me from the library of King's College, except a Homer and a Lexicon, that I might still rub on with my Greek; but among the articles in my sitting-room, I found, greatly to my surprise, much the same collection of English volumes, both as to quality and quantity, as was placed in the Inn at Laurence Kirk. The volumes, too, were displayed in exactly the same kind of repository, a glazed mahogany case, dapperly perched upon the top of a bureau.

"With this windfall of books for light reading, Homer for a study, my own scribbling for a hobby-horse, a few acquaintances which I made among respectable inhabitants of the town, and the officers quartered there, I had wherewithal either to improve time or to waste it, in Montrose.

"Here then, I remained stationary for three months, bating one trip to Rory Macleod, in March, to receive my quarterage, and hear his wonted dissertation upon economy. Here I wrote the last act of 'Two to One,' and forwarded the play to my father, who immediately accepted it for representation at his theatre, but by some accident it was not performed until the season afterwards, when I had returned to town, and witnessed its first representation; here, also, I did not fail to revisit the fisherman's widow, who had been so hospitable to me,

and had screened me from persons exercising the only Freedom of the Press which is unpopular; for instead of maintaining English liberty, it takes away that birthright of the subject.

"The abruptness of my unexpected return, and in a new character, beneath the widow's humble roof, almost overpowered her with surprise. She recognised my features immediately, but not my person. She would hardly credit that the English gentleman, then before her, could be the way-faring soldier of a highland regiment, for whom she had procured a passage in the collier? Nor did any thing ever ruffle the smooth current of our intercourse, but her constant refusal of money, as a token of the gratitude I owed her. We then indeed would bicker, but it was a friendly warfare, and ended, after many skirmishes, in a compromise, by her acceptance of some household linen, both for bed and board, which I knew would be of use to her.

"Three months had passed, when it came into my head, I know not how, unless Homer's lofty song of Troy besieged, and heroes slaughtered, had brought it there, to obtain a general knowledge of ancient history; this required, besides the regular perusal of certain historians, a variety of references to other authors, to maps, &c. My immediate residence afforded no facilities for such a research, King's College did. I was still indulged with leave to borrow books from its library, though not allowed to transport my loans in the quantities I wanted, to a distance of about thirty-eight miles; and as the mountain could not come to Mahomet, not that I

presume to compare myself with that illustrious conjurer, Mahomet determined to go to the mountain. I bade adieu, therefore, to my lively Quakers, went back, not to my old rooms, for I had dismantled their walls, but to their vicinity; and, at the end of May, settled myself in New Aberdeen, where I had several acquaintances.

"Verily, friend Aminadab's habitation was a pleasant place, and it spoiled me for dwelling in the heart of cities; wherefore, on quitting his apartments, to take up my abode as above mentioned, I was desirous of obtaining lodgings as similar, in point of situation, to those I had just relinquished, as possible. I could meet with nothing of this sort exactly answerable to my wish. The nearest to the mark was a cottage on the skirts of the New Town, where rooms to let had been a great while unoccupied, and were likely to remain so, a great while longer; and for an appalling reason, the house was haunted! But this drawback upon domestic quiet was counterbalanced by a material advantage, the apparition, there was but one, had considerably lowered the rent; and what is one solitary spectre, in a neatly furnished tenement, when the best rooms in it are to be had dog-cheap? I consulted Rory Macleod on the subject, who advised me to strike a bargain for the apartments, without delay, which I did accordingly. I had just left a family of Quakers, and it was indifferent to me whether people with whom I resided were moved by the spirit, or disturbed by a ghost.

"As every ghost has its peculiar and distinct

mysteries, it may be better to explain matters a little minutely.

"The house, in which I lodged, appertained to one of those marine carriers, calling themselves captains, whose business it is to keep a vessel in the alternate states of plethora and depletion; and he was perpetually lading and unlading his floating stage-waggon, for the transportation of all sorts of goods at various ports: but his chief voyages were, I believe, to Russia.

"On the homeward-bound passage from St. Petersburgh, his ship's carpenter got drunk one night, tumbled into the sea, and was drowned; and as a carpenter does not possess the same buoyancy as the substances on which he goes to work, the odds were that when he had reached the bottom of the Baltic, he would not come up again, and swim to Scotland: but, in this instance, the knowing ones were taken in, for, when the captain landed at New Aberdeen, his family ran open-mouthed to him on the Quay, and astounded him with the news that the carpenter had got home a considerable time before him; that he danced on the floor of the empty garret, in the dead of the night, with his bag of tools at his back, and hammered at short intervals, from twelve o'clock till dawn. Those who asserted this terrifying fact, must doubtless have peeped at him through the key-hole; and they moreover affirmed, after a comparison of dates, that the first performance of his pas seul was on the very night he was drowned. It cannot, indeed, be said, as of Hamlet's father, that the sepulchre had 'given him up,' for he

had never been buried; but by all the laws of legends, and preternaturals, he was as good, downright, and orthodox, a ship's carpenter's ghost as ever revisited the glimpses of the moon; had he happened to fall into the Red Sea, instead of the Baltic, it must infallibly have laid him.

"In respect to the captain's abode, its locality, and its inhabitants, the house itself was not very unlike some of those jemmy boxes, fitted up as villas by minor tradesmen, in the environs of London, those dear little Honeysuckle halls, and Rosebud lodges. It had a garden before it of a few feet square, fenced with trellis work; inside were two parlours on the ground-floor, each of these had a smaller room behind them, further back, a bed-room for one of the family, close to the kitchen, pantry and scullery; and over all these, nothing but garrets. Be it remembered, too, pardon me, my good reader, I must be precise in my description, for it has a bearing upon the ghost: be it remembered, then, that the house was completely insulated, standing in front of a road, over which, being only a by-lane to the links, a carriage or even a horseman, or pedestrian, very seldom passed. On one side, and a furlong off, were the north-eastern extremities of New Aberdeen; on the other, an open field or two, adjoining the aforesaid links; at the back, but at a respectful distance, was a cow-house.

"The inhabitants were, the captain, when returned from a voyage; his niece, tall and straight; a male relation, short and hump-backed; and a maid-servant. The niece acted as housekeeper, but the

crooked kinsman, who followed some trade in the town, was never at home, Sundays excepted, till dusk. I occupied one of the parlours, and the room behind it: sitting in the first, and sleeping in the latter; the counterpart of these rooms the captain reserved for himself; the niece slept near the kitchen; the maid servant in one of the front garrets, Humpy in another, and the empty garret, where the ghost hammered and danced, was exactly over my bedchamber.

"On the first night of entering the lodgings, as my habits were tolerably early, I went to bed half an hour before, 'the witching time of night, when churchyards yawn.' I was between sleeping and waking, and the melancholy eight-day clock in the captain's parlour was striking twelve, when, hark! the punctual ghost startled me by so decided and solemn a thump, on the garret floor, that he seemed to say, 'You are a new lodger, and I must give you a hearty welcome.' The sound resembled that of a sledge hammer striking upon an anvil, but as if both hammer and anvil were muffled: dull, dismal, and heavy: so heavy indeed, that it made the poker and tongs rattle in the fire-place. Soon after the first blow came a second, and another, and another, then one not so loud, then several in quick succession: by and by, the shuffling of feet, or the dancing; and so on, more or less, till daybreak; in short, it kept me all night awake, quoting from one of old Dibdin's songs, 'the devil take the carpenter!'

"Having been told that I was to expect some-

thing of this kind, and the lodging being cheap in consequence, I had, perhaps, no great right to complain; the nuisance, however, had been palliated, by the niece who let the apartments; and when, instead of the gentle raps and taps, as she described them, there came such a confounded thunderstorm of thumps, directly over my head, I could not help thinking that, in comparison with the rent, the row was too great, by at least half a crown a week.

"Night after night, the disturbance continued, though with different degrees of violence: but the proverb of familiarity breeding contempt applies as well to the dead as to the quick: whence it happens, that having a ghost for a fellow-lodger is much the same as living next door to a trunk-maker, he annoys you terribly at first, but, after a little time, you take no notice of him: still there was quite enough to excite curiosity, and nobody likes to give up a riddle.

"I suspected a hoax, and that the *bossu*,* whom I have mentioned as a male relation, was the hoaxer; but this was a mistake, for poor little crook-back turned out to be a rank coward; and so far from shamming a ghost, would have fled like an arrow, though looking like the bow, to avoid one. One night, for instance, while the carpenter was more busy than usual, I stole softly up stairs to the empty garret, and kicked open the door, a process easily effected, as the wood-work was slight and the lock bad: at the moment after the bounce which the forcing of this barrier occasioned, my ears were

* Hunch-back.

assailed by a deep groan! All was silent when I got into the room, all was silent till I came out; and the candle in my hand would have enabled me to see anybody, if there had been anybody there to be seen; but there was neither flesh, blood, nor spirit, neither hoaxer, nor carpenter, nor carpenter's tools, nor his shadow; there was my own shadow against the naked walls, and nothing else: nothing but an unfurnished garret, and the window screwed down in the inside.

"Previously to returning down stairs, I gave three very hard slaps, with my open hand, against the chamber door adjoining to that which was haunted, when the agonized Humpy, who lay there, sent forth a hideous shriek, as if all the screech-owls in Der Freischütz had been in his stomach. It convinced me that he was no practical joker, and that he had been listening in his bed to the extra noises of that fearful and particular night,

'Distilled almost to jelly with his fear.'

"It then also occurred to me, that the deep groan above mentioned must have come from the same quarter. Next morning, little Æsop fabled greatly, about all the clatter he had heard; exaggerating much, and inventing more; and, on the succeeding night, the carpenter laid it on thicker, to express his anger at the liberty I had taken with his workshop.

"Thoroughly convinced, at last, that neither Humpy nor any of the family were playing tricks, I nevertheless held it to be highly improbable, if not impossible, from the situation of the captain's house, which I have endeavoured to describe accurately,

that noises could be conveyed into it by external accident, or design; at least, such noises as hammering and dancing, lasting all night, and every night, and all concentrated in the back garret.

"The road in front, be pleased to recollect, and the grounds behind it, were unfrequented and uninhabited; so was the tract, on one side; on the other side, the nearest dwellings on the skirts of the New Town were too remote to be brought into question. The cow-house in the rear, though even that was detached and many yards apart, seemed to be the only spot from which an auricular illusion was at all likely to proceed; that place, therefore, was to be searched; but I was as doubtful of discovering anything there, to advance the theory of sounds, as I was certain that the term *acoustics*, whatever mere English readers may think, is not derived from a *cow-house*.

"Well, this repository for cattle was explored, once, twice, and thrice; at times too when the carpenter was in high force, and raging his utmost; but no cattle, or cattle-keepers were to be found there: no cow, bull, ox, nor ass, nor any animal, brute or human. Thus then, the affair remained *in statu quo*, and the hammering and dancing went on involved in mystery, and so it may be going on at this very day, provided the house be standing, and the ghost indefatigable.

"That in these our times, strange effects arise only from natural causes; that amphibious carpenters, drowned past all help from the Humane Society, never do posthumous jobs in a garret: that

a spectre now neglects his nocturnal duty rather more, if possible, than a watchman, are points upon which I have fully made up my mind; but the foregoing wonder of wonders is one of those gordian knots which tighten the tethers of superstition, and which reason and research have not been able to untie.

Ancient history and the ghost were the two chief objects of my inquiry during the summer of 1783; and the few deciduous leaves had fallen which an Aberdeen autumn has to drop, when I received a most welcome letter from my father to recall me from my banishment. My instructions were, not to return to London instantly, but to be in Soho Square at the approaching Christmas; I determined, therefore, as it was then the beginning of November, to go to Edinburgh towards the end of the month, to stay there about three weeks, and then to proceed on my journey home.

"Since Aberdeen, considering both towns as one, had always appeared to me a seat of exile, and a region of dulness, I did not anticipate the regret I experienced on the morning of my departure from it; but such is the force of habit, and the caprice of human nature, that after having lived for a length of time in the place where I had been grumbling, day after day, at every thing and every body, I could not help feeling a momentary pensiveness on quitting the old spot, and quitting it, in all probability, for ever. Shaking hands with honest Rory Macleod, who, though too little of a disciplinarian, and too much of an economist, meant well, and had a truly

kind heart, was a painful leave-taking: the very streets, as I drove off in a post-chaise, and looked at the buildings for the last time, inspired me with an interest which they had never excited before; and those individual Aberdeenites, with whom I had formed an acquaintance, floated in my mind, with all their best qualities on the surface.

"On summing up time lost and improved during both my actual and nominal residence in Aberdeen, I flattered myself that I had wasted less than might have been expected from one so flighty and indolent as myself.

"While a member of King's College, I had voluntarily acquired a much larger portion of classical knowledge in two years, and 'a wee bit,' as the Scotch say, than I had compulsively been taught in more than five times two at Marylebone, Westminster, and Oxford. My reading, therefore, was so much time improved: as to my writing, I might be puzzled to say on which side of the account it should be placed, if it had not eventually been the foundation of a trade for me, though I might have found a much better than that of a dramatist, which I have often exercised to advantage in point of mere money; and if that had failed, I had gained something else, for by privilege of my freedom of the city of New Aberdeen, I may return there, and set up a shop whenever I please. A further gain too, which I had forgot, but the word freedom has put me in mind of it, was my initiation into the craft of Free-Masonry, that grand arcanum which is confided to thousands all over the world, and has

thereby become, as Lingo would call it, 'a secret *pro bono publico*.'

"It appears that I valued the honours of the New Town Lodge above those of the Old Town University; for I was proud of being raised to the rank of a Master Mason, but when King's College complimented me with the offer of a Master of Arts' degree, I declined it.

"Things fall out, and things fall down; and, among other chances and mischances, there happened to be a heavy fall of snow a few days before I should have gone to London; in consequence of which, as a Scotch fall of snow, like a Scotch man, is remarkable for perseverance, my stay at Edinburgh was protracted till late in January.

"As the remittance for my travelling expenses sent to me from the Haymarket Treasurer was more ample than it might have been if coming directly from the Manager himself, I could afford to choose my own mode of conveyance; I continued my route therefore from Newcastle to London in post-chaises, delighted to revisit my native land, and doubly enjoying its polished prospects in contrast with the rugged scenery from which I had just been emancipated; thinking too, with all due deference to the splendid products of the quarry, that the sight of a comfortable English brick village was quite refreshing, after many of the melancholy stone-built towns in Scotland.

"My father welcomed me to Soho Square in the full flow of his kindness, but it ebbed a little on the morning after my arrival, when the housekeeper

expounded to him the lamentable contents of Mr. George Colman's small travelling trunk, which threatened an immediate call upon the parental purse, to furnish raiment for the prodigal returned. The careful dame had set down upon a small scrap of paper, all that the trunk contained, but the list was almost as meagre as Prince Harry's inventory* of Poins's wardrobe; each article enumerated had seen so much service, that there was no saying of them, according to the consoling apophthegm, 'when things are at the worst, they will mend:' yet so few were they in number, they seemed to corroborate the opinion of Goldsmith's Hermit, that

'Man wants but little here below.'

"The fact is, foreseeing the term of my banishment must soon expire, and having, spite of Rory Macleod's economical advice, quite calls enough upon my quarterly allowance, without the charges for apparel, I had latterly suffered both my linen and woollen to diminish and decay, trusting to what actually happened, a complete fit-out on my return to London, at my father's cost.

"When fully and fashionably equipped, I had, during this winter, only to do what many well dressed young gentlemen, and not a few old ones did in that day and do in the present, *videlicet*,

* 'What a disgrace is it to me to remember thy name, or to know thy face to-morrow, or to take note how many pair of silk stockings thou hast; *viz.* these, and those that were the peach-coloured ones; or to bear the inventory of thy shirts, as one for superfluity, and one other for use.'

Shakspeare's Henry IV.

nothing at all, unless the occupations of a lounging man of pleasure in London, may be called something. I devoted indeed some part of every morning to reading, for which my father's library afforded me excellent opportunities."

In March 1783, Mr. Colman gave the public a new translation of, and Commentary on, Horace's Art of Poetry, in which he produced a new system to explain this very difficult poem. In opposition to Doctor Hurd, he supposed " that one of the sons of Piso, undoubtedly the elder, had either written or meditated a poetical work, most probably a tragedy, and that he had, with the knowledge of the family, communicated his piece or intention to Horace. But Horace, either disapproving of the work, or doubting of the poetical faculties of the elder Piso, or both, wished to dissuade him from all thought of publication. With this view he formed the design of writing this epistle, addressing it with a courtliness and delicacy perfectly agreeable to his acknowledged character, indifferently to the whole family, the father and his two sons. *Epistola ad Pisones de Arte Poeticâ.*"

This hypothesis is supported with much learning, ingenuity, and modesty; and if not fully established, is at least as well entitled to applause as that adopted by the Bishop of Worcester.

On the publication of this work, the Bishop thus wrote to Dr. Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury. " Give my compliments to Colman, and thank him for the handsome manner in which he has treated me; and tell him that I think he is right."

The following letters from some of the eminent literary characters of the day, will attest the estimation in which Colman's translation was held on its appearance. The following is from Edmund Malone, the commentator on Shakspeare:

"Mr. Malone presents his compliments to Mr. Colman, and returns him many thanks for his most obliging present; and requests his acceptance of an unpublished pamphlet on the inexhaustible subject of Shakspeare, in which, by a singular coincidence, Mr. Malone finds he has had the good fortune to stumble on a motto, that has likewise attracted the notice of Mr. Colman.

"Thursday, May 6, 1783."

From Dr. William Vincent, whose writings are familiar to the learned, he received the subjoined letter. Doctor Vincent was Under Master of Westminster School, then Head Master, then Dean of Westminster.

George Colman (the younger) speaks of him feelingly; "He had clearness of head, and great strength of arm; I have smarted sundry times under the influence of the latter."

"Dean's Yard, May 9, 1783.

"Dear Sir,

"I return you my best acknowledgments for the present of your translation, and if it will be any satisfaction to you to hear that you have gained a suffrage to your opinion, I do assure you, you have one in me. The original, though a study of no small labour, has ever been, in parts obscure to me; in those parts, I mean, which you particularly com-

plain of, but the point you more especially wish to elucidate, is, as far my judgment goes, made perfectly clear.

"There is a particular which strikes me as adding much to the probability of your conjecture of the elder Piso attempting a tragedy, which is, that according to the fashion of the age, every man of education attempted to write in verse, and most of them for the stage. Julius Cæsar produced an Œdipus; Sueton. cap. 56. in Julio; and Augustus would have done as much, if he could. Sueton. Octav. 85. If this observation should please you, I imagine instances enough might be collected to satisfy a Scaliger, or an Heinsius. Believe me,

Yours very faithfully, W. Vincent."

Horace Walpole thus addressed Colman :—

"Strawberry Hill, May 10, 1783.

"Dear Sir,

"For so you must allow me to call you, after your being so kind as to send me so valuable and agreeable a present as your translation of Horace. I wish compliment had left any terms uninvaded, of which sincerity could make use without suspicion. Those would be precisely what I would employ in commending your poem; and if they proved too simple to content my gratitude, I would be satisfied with an offering to truth, and wait for a nobler opportunity of sacrificing to the warmer virtue.

"If I have not lost my memory, your translation is the best I have ever seen of that difficult epistle. Your expression is easy and natural, and when requisite, poetic; in short, it has a prime merit, it has the air of an original.

"Your hypothesis, in your Commentary is very ingenious. I do not know whether it is true, which now cannot be known; but if the scope of the epistle was, as you suppose, to hint in a delicate and friendly manner to the elder of Piso's sons, that he had written a bad tragedy, Horace had

certainly executed his plan with great address; and, I think, nobody will be able to show that any thing in the poem clashes with your idea. Nay, if he went farther, and meaned to disguise his object, by giving his epistle the air of general rules on poetry and tragedy, he achieved both purposes, and while the youth his friend, was at once corrected, and put to no shame, all other readers were kept in the dark, except you, and diverted to different scents.

"Excuse my commenting your comment, but I had no other way of proving that I really approve both the version and criticism, than by stating the grounds of my applause. If you have wrested the sense of the original to favour your own hypothesis, I have not been able to discover your art, for I do not perceive where it has been employed. If you have given Horace more meaning than he was entitled to, you have conferred a favour on him, for you have made his whole epistle consistent, a beauty all the spectacles of all his commentators could not find out; but indeed they proceed on the profound laws of criticism, you by the laws of common sense, which marching on a plain natural path is very apt to arrive sooner at the goal, than they who travel on the Appian way, which was a very costly and durable work, but is very uneasy, and at present, does not lead to a quarter of the places, to which it was originally directed. I am, Sir, with great regard,

Your much obliged, and not for the first time,
and most obedient humble Servant,
Hor. Walpole."

From Dr. Thomas Warton he received the following letter:

"Trinity College, Oxon. May 11, 1783.

"Dear Colman,

"I am exceedingly obliged to you, for your very kind present. I think your theory is most ingeniously and

rationally supported, and that many obscure, and doubtful passages, are cleared up, and placed in a new point of view. I much like the simple elegance and vigour of your translation.

I am, my dear Sir,

Very sincerely your's,

T. Warton."

From Dr. Joseph Warton.

"My Dear Sir, Winton, May 12, 1783.

"I thank you very heartily for your epistle to the Pisos, and for the kind address with which you have honoured me. *Ornâsti me.* There would be as much affectation, as insensibility, if I denied that it did not give me much pleasure. I cannot help believing, but that your work will become a popular book. Your translation is not only exact, but surely most elegant and clear; and I like the notes much. One I must point out, that on the disadvantages of the chorus, p. 29, though I used to be of a different opinion: but I think what you say unanswerable; particularly where you observe, what has not been observed before, 'that if the chorus be revised, all the other part of the ancient tragedy must be revised along with it.' I see you have paid the Bishop [Hurd] many handsome compliments, yet I still think many parts of his commentary are tortured and far-sought. When I come to town, I shall not fail giving myself the pleasure of visiting you, and I hope you will not forget us, but pass some days with us in the autumn.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your affectionate and obliged,

Friend and Servant,

J. Warton."

The Bishop of St. Asaph,* thus expressed his acknowledgments :

" Dear Sir, Bolton Street, May 15, 1783.

" I return you my best thanks for your most obliging present, after giving myself a little time to estimate the value of it. Indeed your translation appears to me to be close, correct, and elegant ; abounding in very happy turns, and written in that familiar stile which it is so difficult to preserve, without running into those flat prosaic verses which are to be found in your quotations from our celebrated authors ; not excepting even the essay on criticism. That easy epistolary stile was the last attainment of Pope himself.

" I have often thought that we wanted some anecdotes of the Piso family, to explain the art and intent of the epistle addressed to them. Bishop Hurd's hypothesis is not true, because it evidently leads him into forced constructions, and endless refinement, without much taste ; which I take to be in some degree the general character of his lordship's writings, as well as of his exemplar Warburton's. Whether your conjectures are strictly truth, I cannot say ; but they look so very like it, that they will answer my purpose, almost as well. They help me to find a natural meaning and a propriety of address in some passages which I hardly knew what to make of before. It would be ingratitude to detain you longer with these grave and trifling reflections, in return for the pleasure and amusement, you have given me.

I am, Dear Sir, with very sincere respect,
Your obliged and obedient,
humble servant,
J. St. Asaph."

* Doctor Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph, opposed Government during the whole of the American War. On a published speech of this prelate, " intended to have been spoken" in the House of Lords, it has been observed that, " amongst all the productions,

And from S. W. Vernon Sadleir, he received the following:

"Dear Sir, Southampton, May 15, 1783.

"Having some friends on a visit, who ingross my time, it has been impossible for me to read your translation of Horace's Ars Poetica, with the attention due to all your productions. I have, however, seen enough to promise myself great pleasure, in this very pleasing mark of your remembrance, and politeness, especially, in the judicious notes and observations.

"I love you for your friendly dedication to the Wartons, and I admire that liberal spirit with which you could prefer those excellent men, to so many of higher rank in life who would have been proud of the compliment. I think you have finely gilded the pill for the Bishop, for a pill it is, notwithstanding all the delicacy of expression. I hope you will gather many converts to your opinion, on this celebrated epistle.

Believe me, dear Sir,
Your much obliged
and faithful Servant,
S. W. Vernon Sadleir."

Not one of the least commendations which Colman received on his translation of the Art of Poetry was that of Dr. Hinchliffe, then Bishop of Peterborough. He was school-fellow with Colman at Westminster, where he rose by his merit, to be Head Master. Cumberland in his Memoirs,* says,

antient or modern, it would be difficult to find an instance of more consummate elegance." He possessed talents for poetry. His sermons, charges, and parliamentary speeches, were printed in two volumes, in the year 1792.

* Vol. I., p. 67.

"Hinchliffe might well be called the child of fortune, for he was born in penury and obscurity, and was lifted into opulence and high station, not by the elasticity of his own genius, but by that lucky combination of opportunities, which merit has no share in making, and modesty no aptitude to seize. At Trinity College, I knew him as an under-graduate below my standing; in the revolution of a few years, I saw him in the station, aforetime filled by my grandfather as Master of the College, and holding with it, the Bishopric of Peterborough: thus doubly dignified with those preferments, which have separately rewarded the learned labours of Cumberland and Bentley."

Bishop Hinchliffe's letter was no doubt highly gratifying to Colman, from their connection in early life.

"My Dear Sir, Conduit Street, June 5, 1783.

"Had I thanked you for the favour of the translation you sent me, before I had read it, I should not have known how much I am obliged to you; I have now run over the whole, and am persuaded you have given a key to the mystery. Your notes contain a great treasure of critical knowledge of the ancient drama, and I have the pleasure to assure you, that the work is looked upon in a most favourable light by far better judges of its merit, than

Your very faithful friend,
and humble Servant,
John Peterborough."

From Thomas Davies, the bookseller, author of Dramatic Miscellanies, Life of Garrick, &c., he received the following note.

" Sir, Russell Street, June 21, 1783.

" I have read over your translation of Horace's Art of Poetry with pleasure. I borrowed a copy from Mr. Cadell, and could wish you would let me call it my own.

" Your notes are learned with liberality, and such as I expected from one of our best critics. You think and judge for yourself; at the same time you pay a just tribute of respect to a great and venerable character.*

" Dr. Johnson who loves you, and always speaks of you with affection, has been greatly indisposed. He is much recovered, and I hope out of danger; a kind inquiry after his health would please him.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

Thomas Davies."

The Haymarket theatre this year exhibited a scene of alteration and improvement, that had been planned with great taste and judgment. In the summer of 1775, Garrick, as chief proprietor of Drury Lane, had employed the Messieurs Adams to renovate that theatre. In a letter to Colman, on its completion, Garrick told him, with exultation, that ' the theatre was noble.' The Messrs. Adams contrived to give the interior of an old gloomy theatre, a new, a gayer, and even a gaudy appearance; but when the first feelings of surprise were passed, men began to reflect a little on the propriety of style adopted in the alteration, and it was generally argued, that though the whole was creditable to the skill and taste of the architects, the decorations were but ill adapted, since the audience part of a playhouse should by no means

* Dr. Hurd, Bishop of Worcester.

divert the eye of the spectator from the scenic effect on the stage, and distract it by an assemblage of unnatural objects, displayed in all the glare of no-meaning painting.

Mr. Harris, urged more by desire of change, than from any real necessity, soon after decorated the interior of Covent Garden theatre; but there a more correct taste was consulted to assist the alterations, and, although the convenience and satisfaction of the audience were principally intended, the theatre was rendered more ornamental, without sacrificing to decoration what should ever be at least the secondary object in any playhouse, the preserving throughout the building a theatrical appearance.

With these examples before him, Colman had a difficult task to call forth the public approbation to his proposed alteration of the Haymarket theatre, but from concurrent testimonies of the day it appears he eminently succeeded. The style was thoroughly dissimilar to those employed in the two winter Theatres. It was lightly elegant, and not too extravagantly gay; or, to speak in other words and in more familiar phrase, it appeared to be well dressed, without looking like a *petit maître*.

"The season commenced May 31st. When the curtain drew up, Mr. Palmer came forward and addressed the audience in a Prologue written by Colman, which, in some of its allusions is singularly happy.

> Of real novelty, we're told there's none;
> We know there's nothing new beneath the sun;

Yet still untir'd, a phantom we pursue;
Still expectation gapes for something new!
To whet your appetite, and pique your taste,
Each bard serves some old dish in new puff paste;
Crams with hard crusts the literary glutton,
And, like Lord Petre, swears they 're beef and mutton.
Old magazines too, each manager plunders,
Like quacks and mountebanks, cries Wonders! Wonders!
Detection scorns; risks contradictions flat;
Boasts a black swan! and gives us—a black cat!
Two magpies thus, all winter charm the ear;
The self-same note our cuckoo dwells on here!
For we, like them, our penny trumpets sound,
And novelty 's the word, the whole year round.
What tho' our house be threescore years of age,
Let us new vamp the box, new lay the stage,
Long paragraphs shall paint, with proud parade,
The gilded front, and airy balustrade;
While on each post the flaming bill displays
Our old new Theatre, and new old plays.
The hag of fashion thus, all paint and flounces,
Fills up her wrinkles, and her age renounces.
Stage answers stage: from other boards, as here,
Have sense and nonsense claim'd by turns your ear.
Here late his jest, Sir Jeffrey Dunstan broke;
Yet here, too, Lillo's muse sublimely spoke:
Here Fielding, foremost of the hum'rous train,
In comic mask indulg'd his laughing vein!
Here frolic Foote, your favour well could beg,
Propp'd by his genuine wit, and only leg;
Their humble follower feels his merit less,
Yet feels, and proudly boasts as much success.
Small though his talents, smaller than his size,
Beneath your smiles his little Lares rise:
And oh! as Jove once grac'd Philemon's thatch,
Oft of our cottage may you lift the latch!
Oft may we greet you, full of hope and fear,
With hearty welcome, tho' but homely cheer!
May our old roof its old success maintain,
Nor know the novelty of your disdain!

Colman produced this season a piece called 'The

Election of Managers,' upon which his son makes the following remarks :

" Parliament was dissolved early in the spring of 1784, when of course the whole country was agitated by a General Election ; and from the first of April, a fit day to begin fooling the electors, till May was far advanced, the contest between Lord Hood, Mr. Fox, and Sir Cecil Wray, kept the city of Westminster in constant confusion. My father, who busied himself no further in national politics than to apply them profitably, when he could, to the politics of his playhouse, opened his Theatre this year, with a prelude of his own writing, called The Election of the Managers ; of which the *Biographia Dramatica* speaks as follows :

" This piece was produced at the time of [immediately after] a general election ; and obtained applause more by temporary allusions to the then election for Westminster, than by any merit in itself. It was at first refused a licence ; but some exceptionable passages having been omitted, it passed the Lord Chamberlain. The character of the well-known Sam House * was introduced and well personated by Mr. Edwin.

" That the piece written in haste for the occasion, was beneath the talents of the author of The Jealous Wife, cannot be denied ; it must also also be admitted that its personalities, though sportive and

* A noted Publican of Wardour Street, and an enthusiastic supporter of Mr. Fox's interests at the election. His dress (or rather undress) was very remarkable ; to which Edwin closely adhered, in his personation of him.

without malice, were quite enough to pose an official examiner of plays, in respect to the propriety of its representation; and personal allusions, if admitted upon the stage, are not likely, without pungent wit or humour, to be very successful. A couple of female characters were introduced among the dramatis personæ of this prelude, evidently meant for portraits of two ladies in high life, who had made themselves conspicuous at the Westminster Election, as partisans in opposite interests; the first, a beautiful duchess,* universally admired and respected; the second, an untitled lady, at that time, but afterwards a countess, in consequence of her husband having succeeded to an earldom. These were personated by Miss Farren and Mrs. Webb, not perhaps only because they were popular actresses, but also from their figures bearing some resemblance to the originals, at whom they were dressed, though not so pointedly as Edwin at Sam House. The prelude was well received, and went on smoothly for several nights, when an unexpected storm arose. Bob Monckton, a buck, (a fat one too) of that era, son to General Monckton of Quebec memory, whose figure stands prominent in West's picture of the death of General Wolfe, came night after night into a stage-box, to hiss, hoot, and cry 'Off! Off!' till he was as hoarse as a raven. This idle young gentleman, it was thought, hooted and croaked from no motive but mere wantonness; however, as one foe, like one fool, makes many, he

* The Duchess of Devonshire.

excited a formidable opposition to the piece; it was thus checked in its career, and soon laid aside.

"No matter now, whether this trifle (for it was a trifle at best) were good, bad, or indifferent; but who should have been the persons to condemn it, is a separate question; and it is surprising to find, in the various periods of our stage history, a host of dramatists persevering in their vocation, undeterred and undisgusted by a herd of Bob Moncktons. I am not discussing here the qualifications of theatrical audiences in general; I only mean to infer that in so large a body there are, and naturally must be, many very unfavourable specimens of that hydra which has obtained, from those whose bread depends upon it, the adulatory title of 'the candid and discerning public;' and that the turbulence of spiteful, or frolicsome, or foolish fellows, has too often caused the failure of dramas which have deserved a better fate."

CHAPTER VI.

1784.

Two to One—Introductory Prologue—The Author's feelings—Frank North—Haymarket Novelties—Shield, the Composer—Dr. Arnold—Visit to France—British Interpreter—Vestris—Beaumarchaise—The Marriage of Figaro—Foreign Acting—Parisian Costume—Regiment de Blaisois—Return to England—Chambers in the Temple—Colman the Younger married at Gretna Green—Dr. Johnson's Funeral—Turk and no Turk—I'll tell you what—Severe Illness of Colman the Elder, at Margate—Dr. Harvey—Secret Despondency—Silver, the Apothecary—Return to London—Colman's Disease.

"On Saturday, June 19, unconscious of fear through ignorance of danger," continues George Colman in his Reminiscences, "I rushed into early publicity, as an avowed dramatist; my first comedy with songs, called 'Two to One,' intended to have been produced the previous summer, was brought forward introduced by an excellent prologue from my father. The allusions in it to the parent bird leading forth its young one, and to Dædalus and Icarus, were happily imagined, and as happily expressed, and to me were very touching. In the brief interval between the Prologue and the beginning of the play, I pressed my father's hand, and thanked him; my spirits were afloat, and he, old stager though he

was, appeared so much affected by my manner, that I—in short, I could not help shedding a few tears; it may be ridiculous perhaps to mention it here, but let those laugh who may, I do not envy them their feelings.

"On second thoughts, as the prologue spoken by Mr. Palmer may not be unwelcome to my readers, I introduce it here.

"To-night, as heralds tell, a virgin muse,
An untrained youth, a new adventurer, sues;
Green in his one-and-twenty, scarce of age,
Takes his first flight, half fledged, upon the stage.
Within this little round, the parent bird
Hath warbled oft; oft patiently you heard;
And, as he strove to raise his eager throat,
Your kind applause made music of his note.
But now, with beating heart, and anxious eye,
He sees his venturous youngling strive to fly;
Like Dædalus, a father's fears he brings,
A father's hopes, and fain would plume his wings.
How vain, alas, his hopes! his fears how vain!
'Tis you must hear, and, hearing, judge the strain.
Your equal justice sinks or lifts his name;
Your frown's a sentence, your applause is fame.
If humour warms his scenes with genial fire,
They 'll e'en redeem the errors of his Sire;
Nor shall his lead—dead to the bottom drop,
By youth's enlivening cork buoy'd up at top.
If characters are marked with ease and truth,
Pleased with his spirit, you 'll forgive his youth:
Should sire and son be both with dulness curs'd,
'And dunce the second follow dunce the first,'
The shallow stripling's vain attempt you 'll mock,
And damn him, for a chip of the old block.

"Puffs at the bottom of play-bills had not then arrived at their perfection; otherwise it would have been announced, that 'the musical comedy of Two

to One, having been received with unanimous and enthusiastic applause, would be repeated every evening till further notice: not an order to be admitted.' Its success, however, and its run were enough to satisfy my vanity, of which I had at that time a very superfluous share.

"Next morning, Sunday, brought in a day of rain: but wet weather could not damp my resolution of sallying forth to show myself. Myself, the author of Two to One, whose fame had been established in the British dominions on the preceding night, by a great house in a little theatre. Now, by the Gods! there is a pleasure in being a very great young coxcomb, which none but young coxcombs know! it is delightful to be intoxicated with the ether of conceit, and not to feel what an ass you are making of yourself.

"I had trudged for an hour under an umbrella, in the dirt and drizzle, before I recollected that my acquaintances in town were few, and that those few would not walk about in the rain upon the chance of falling in my way, to greet me on my triumphs. Nobody fished harder for compliments, and I got but one congratulatory bite during the day; this was from Frank North,* to whom I had never spoken, but knowing me by sight, he said, as he passed me in St. James's Street, 'Mr. Colman, allow me to wish you joy;' and never could any man wish me joy whose countenance and conversation were better calculated to inspire it. Soon after this we were introduced to each other; his con-

* Afterwards Earl of Guilford; he was second son of the then Lord North, the Prime Minister.

vivial wit, his flow of humour, his honourable principles, and his open generosity of heart, are too well known to require my record of them. I enjoyed his intimate friendship for many years, and our mutual regard remained unbroken and undiminished to the hour of his much lamented death. The loss of so dear a friend was a shock from which I could not soon recover, and I contemplate his memory with the sincerest affection."

The music of the songs of 'Two to One,' was composed by Dr. Arnold. The drama, in fact, proffered much promise of future excellence, and some epigrammatic lines in the newspapers, immediately after its representation, marked the public sense in its favour.

To George Colman, Esq. jun, on the deserved success of his Comedy 'Two to One.'

"Another writes because his father writ,
And proves himself a bastard by his wit:
So Young declaims—but you, by right divine,
Can claim a just, hereditary line;
By learning tutor'd as by fancy nurs'd
A *George the Second* sprung from *George the First.*" *

The words of the songs only were printed in 1784, but a transcript of the piece with Colman's autograph corrections is now in the Duke of Devonshire's Collections of the English drama. At the sale of the author's effects in Brompton-square, November 30, 1836, this and several other unpublished plays, were offered for competition; but as there were no bidders above the reserved prices,

* Very like John Taylor, afterwards one of the Proprietors of The Sun Newspaper.

they were withdrawn, and presented, by Mrs. Colman, to the Duke.

"The novelties, in this season at the Haymarket, "which followed 'Two to One,' were, 'The Mogul Tale,' 'Lord Russel,' 'Hunt the Slipper,' 'The Noble Peasant,' 'The Two Connoisseurs,' and 'Peeping Tom.'

"The 'Mogul Tale,'" says George Colman, "which turned upon the new invention of balloons, those ingenious inutilities which were then the rage, was Mrs. Inchbald's first production, public one, I mean, of which that fair lady was happily delivered; and her subsequent literary progeny have done great honour to their now deceased mamma. Parsons's performance in this piece of the chief character, a cobbler, was excellent. 'Hunt the Slipper,' a farce, by a clergyman,* was, if we are to believe the Biographia Dramatica, 'far from a dull piece;' this is negative praise; perhaps it stood like a half-way house between a heath and a forest, as near to barrenness as to fertility. 'The Noble Peasant,' a shelved comic opera, by Holcroft, had some very pretty music.† Hayley's tragedy of Lord Russel is better suited to the closet than to the stage; and his Two Connoisseurs, a comedy in rhyme, were not 'Hayley gaily;' the constant clinking of the verses was tiresome. O'Keeffe's Peeping Tom, upon the ticklish ground of Lady Godiva, keeps the

* Rev. Henry Knapp. It was surreptitiously printed in 1792, 12mo.

† It was acted through the season, after an equivocal reception on its first night.

stage to this day ; it is below some other efforts of this very entertaining and eccentric author, but it is very pleasant ; its music particularly so. There has been no Peeping Tom equal to Edwin ; the nearest to him was Jack Bannister ; and Bannister was admirable in many characters which Edwin could not touch."

When 'The Noble Peasant,' had been accepted by Colman, the manager wished that the opera should be composed by his musical director, Dr. Arnold, but it appears that Holcroft had in the first instance applied to Shield. A letter of the latter to Doctor Arnold, evinces a little want of harmony on his new ground.

" Saturday morning, Barlow Street.

" Sir,

" With this note I have sent 'The Noble Peasant,' written by Holcroft. I am very happy to find that I have your good wishes, and I beg leave to assure you that I shall receive particular pleasure whenever you are successful.

" It was a matter of indifference to me whether Mr. Colman played the above-mentioned opera with my music or not. But you generously refused setting it, when you were told that I had done part of it. This, as well as several other acts to which I have been a witness, convince me that those people who endeavoured to give me a different opinion of you, retailed falsehoods. Any person who is in the possession of the good sense and musical abilities of Dr. Arnold, despises the meanness of depreciating another in a public coffee-room, &c. It is only weak, envious people who can submit to degrade themselves in such an unwarrantable manner. The many works I have seen of yours, replete with knowledge and genius, made me ever respect you as a musician. For though I possess a spirit that will

not suffer an insult, it is not in my disposition to be guilty of any unjustifiable act towards you, consequently I never uttered a syllable against you in your professional line.

"If it is ever in my power to oblige you, you may command

Your most humble Servant,

Wm. Shield."

"P.S.—Anything that displeases you in the Opera shall be altered without hesitation.

"To Doctor Arnold."

Dr. Arnold was very intimate with both the Colmans. In 1766 he undertook the direction of the music of the Haymarket Theatre, having previously held the same situation at Covent Garden. In the discharge of these duties he composed about forty pieces, amongst which were 'The Maid of the Mill,' 'The Son in Law,' 'The Castle of Andalusia,' 'Inkle and Yarico,' 'The Battle of Hexham,' 'The Surrender of Calais,' 'The Children in the Wood, 'The Mountaineers,' &c., each containing beauties that never can be entirely forgotten. Of music of the graver cast he composed Dr. Brown's sacred ode 'The Cure of Saul,' the Oratorios of Abimelech, the Resurrection, and the Prodigal Son. The latter effort procured him the degree of Doctor of Music, at Oxford, when Lord North was installed as Chancellor. In 1769 he purchased Marylebone Gardens, then a place of fashionable resort; but this proved a bad speculation. In 1783 he was appointed organist and composer to the King, and in 1786 Dr. Arnold, encouraged by George III., commenced the publication of an edition in score of Handel's works. The

oratorios were conducted by him with great success for many years. He died in 1802, and was buried with more than usual marks of respect, in Westminster Abbey, of which he had been organist since 1793.

To return to the narrative of George Colman:

"Near the end of August I went to Paris, in consequence of an odd commutation of my father's design to send me into Switzerland for a year or two; a plan which I then dreaded, and now regret that it was abandoned; but at that time I considered Switzerland as another Scotland, and a sojournment there as a second exile. I could now be content and happy to repose for the remainder of my life, in any of its picturesque cantons, taking my fireside with me; regretting to leave some very few friends in England; and trusting for any other society to the honest folks among the Alps.* But a counsellor or two, with whom I had some interest, in my father's cabinet, represented to him my repugnance to the proposed scheme; and it was arranged that I should take an excursion, for only a month or six weeks, into France, to Paris, or any other place I pleased, among our Gallic neighbours, and then return, to commence, I groaned at the decree! the toilsome study of the law.

"Sending me across the Straits of Dover for a six weeks' tour, seemed to answer no other purpose than killing young master's time, and draining papa's

* I never read the account of Gibbon's house and garden, and his society at Lausanne, without wishing myself there. See Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works, published by the late Lord Sheffield.

pocket; but there was deeper policy in it than appears upon the surface. I had not yet sowed my wild oats; and this diversion might serve to break off some London pursuits, which it was not advisable in me to continue.

"To trust so flighty a youth alone upon this gay excursion, was held to be as unwise as suffering him to continue an idler in town; a person, therefore, was chosen for my fellow-traveller, in the middle capacity of guardian and companion. This was an old officer in the navy, who had stuck in a lieutenancy for a sad number of years, an intimate acquaintance of my father's, a favourite of mine, a very poor and a very honourable gentleman. He volunteered going with me, and, as he had lived much in France, and was consequently supposed to be a proficient in the language, he was considered to be the very man for such a purpose; he had even a Gallic kind of air about him; but when we got to Calais, I found that, however, he might have a French look, he had very little indeed of the French tongue. The first *échantillon* he gave me of his power to *parley voo* was immediately after our landing, when he roared out to the beggars who flocked round us, '*Je vows donny riang.*' He was besides, not at all a man of the world; and, although it is not for me to say what sort of a bear I might be, I could scarcely have been danced by a more incompetent leader. His good-nature, however, was inexhaustible; and between my English French and his jargon, we worked our way up to Paris very sociably, and with little difficulty. As to French, I found that I could talk

it best after dinner; the polite natives always encourage a shy Englishman to chatter, in spite of his blunders; '*il faut hazarder*,' they tell him, and when a risk is to be run, it is wonderful how their champagne, burgundy, and claret, screw up a man's courage!

"Who but really long-sighted politicians, if such there be, could have anticipated, in this year of my first journey to France, the horrors which soon arose there? On going to the Opera at Paris in 1784, I found the house crammed, in consequence of young Vestris's re-appearance after his imprisonment for having refused to dance, on some occasion, at the Queen's command. The loyal parterre was so indignant at his contumacious conduct towards Majesty, that they insisted upon his asking pardon upon his knees; the young *Dieu de la Danse* did not, indeed, exactly obey this public mandate; for, after his many gesticulations of humility and contrition; the louder they called out '*à genoux! à genoux!*' the higher he capered, but in a very few years from this time, the enthusiasts for arbitrary monarchy confined the King and Queen virtually as prisoners in their own metropolis; then dethroned them, actually incarcerated them, and then cut off their heads!*

* During their stay at the Tuileries, I saw Louis Seize and Marie-Antoinette at military Mass, which by the by is something like taking Heaven by storm. The King looked fat and rather vacant, as if nothing had happened; the care-worn Queen was greatly altered since I had seen her at the Court of Versailles on my first journey; she had grown very much thinner, and appeared to be forcing a smile, but it was "smiling at grief."

"Beaumarchais had bitten the Parisians, and they were all *folle journée* mad. The translation of this play, under the title of 'Follies of a Day, or The Marriage of Figaro,' by Holcroft, was very well received at Covent Garden Theatre, in the same year. My friend Reynolds saw this French piece, as I did, in its run at Paris, I have, therefore, little to say about it, after the account given by so good a judge. I agree with him as to the perfect acting and the personal charms of the then fascinating Contat; the actress too who performed the page, I forget her name, was very pretty and very clever; but I do not coincide with my friend when he says, 'Molé, though then sixty, looked and performed the Count admirably:' he looked, in my eyes, a very respectable solid *sexagenaire*, and I thought his figure, like his acting, much too heavy for the *volage* Almaviva. Age does not much improve a man's fire nor his looks in the *rôles tendres;* but, after all, Almaviva can scarcely be classed among the tender lovers, unless the passion for all woman kind be considered as tenderness.

"There is a soliloquy in the above-mentioned play, spoken by Figaro, which delighted the audience, and is nearly as long as some of our modern sermons. How comes it that Frenchmen, who are reckoned a much more volatile nation than we are, not only tolerate but admire upon the stage, long winded speeches, and listen eagerly to narratives and declamations, which make sober John Bull either hiss or go to sleep? I can only account for this paradox by their considering, as a light people are

apt to do, their amusement to be matters of the utmost importance; and that they look upon every play as a subject for grave study, while we go to see them chiefly for relaxation.

"In regard to French acting, I mean only comic acting, the Italians and French seem to me to be altogether better gifted as performers than the English; generally speaking, they are more actors by nature, more vivacious, less *gauche* in their deportment; look at them in private life, even in the streets, and you are convinced of this. They represent their dramas throughout better than we do in England; every performer's attention, individually and collectively, is engaged in the business of the scene, from beginning to end; whereas many of our actors cease to act, the moment they have ceased to utter. In their provincial theatres, at least those which I have seen, their plays are better got up, to use a technical term, than in most of our playhouses out of London, and with none of those daubing mummers, and walking-stick lovers, whom we see in the country.

"Now and then indeed, with all the grace and ease of French manners, we may find some examples of coarseness upon their stage. One night at Lisle, I was at the representation of *Le Barbier de Seville,* in which a very pleasing and elegant lady performed the character of Rosina; after having sealed a letter, she made two or three attempts to blow out a wax taper, when, proving unsuccessful, she extinguished the light *à force de cracher:* but this I attribute to the inconsistencies of her country, rather than to

individual vulgarity in the performer, for the audience, so far from being shocked at the circumstance, took no notice of it whatever. It was only an instance of one of those anomalies observable in a nation so highly polished; a nation which made Sterne drollingly exclaim, when alluding to one of their very gross apostrophes, 'how my heart is wrung with pity and fellow-feeling, when I reflect what miseries must have been their lot, and how bitterly so refined a people must have smarted, to have forced them upon the use of it.'*

"For their tragedies, it is my humble opinion, which will bring all French and some English critics upon my back, there is not one grain of true nature, either in the authors or actors of them.

"On our return from Paris, I say our, for I must not forget my good-natured companion, who had so long been a lieutenant run to seed, that he had shot up, more through the courtesy of the world than his own assumption, into the title of captain. On our return—but hold—I had forgot to mention how my friend the Sea-captain had been newly rigged by a barber of the *rue St. Honoré*, in a formidable square wig, and how he crowded such a prodigious quantity of sail in the shape of curls and a toupée, that he was in danger of being blown out of the open barouche which we had hired of Dessein at Calais; and how I was dressed in the *outré* of Parisian puppyism, after the designs of the famed Monsieur Louis, the then fashionable French tailor, whereby

* See Sentimental Journey, under the head of "The Bidet."

we had made ourselves two of the greatest quizzes in our different styles, to be seen in a summer's day, or rather, to be correct in my chronology, a day late in the autumn.

" In our return then, for I must begin my period again, and I hope with better success in getting to the end of it, we stopped at Bethune, a town of Artois, dull enough in itself, but then greatly enlivened by the gallant *Régiment de Blaisois*, of which Monsieur Dillon, celebrated at the French Court as *le beau Dillon*, was Colonel, and also by a splendid company of Cuirassiers. Each of those corps was excellently appointed, and the officers belonging to them were the *élites* of well-bred military men. How different from those who soon succeeded them, the *canaille* who started into command in the revolutionary army !

" My companion luckily met in this town a gentleman to whom he had shown some civilities in England ; this was a lively, short, and very brown, Captain of the *Blaisois*, much respected and beloved by all the regiment ; he introduced us to all his brother officers, and to those of the Cuirassiers ; and with so earnest a recommendation, that it induced us to stay in the town for some little time. Colonel Dillon did us the honour to invite us every day to the mess, and postponed the dinner hour from twelve o'clock, such was the usage then, till one. Those with whom we sat down, put us perfectly at our ease, by making no fuss of their hospitalities, a proof of good taste which I had not met with in some houses where I had been a *convive*, and was

overwhelmed with attentions, insomuch that I was nearly starved in the midst of plenty. My anxious hosts at Paris, conceiving that an Englishman could really relish nothing but 'Rost Bif,' constantly crammed this food, which they do not know how to dress,* under my nose; and insisted in the excess of their kindness that I should eat that, and nothing else; in consequence, I was sometimes obliged to dine upon the burnt-up rib of a skinny ox, while longing for a delicious *fricandeau* standing near it.

"Our military friends at Bethune, although they did not attempt English cookery, desired us however to observe one custom after dinner, which they voted to be quite *à l'Anglaise*, '*mais, il faut de Ponche*,' they said; a bowl of what they thought punch was accordingly placed upon the table; it was nothing more than *Vin de Grave*, or some other light wine, very little diluted, made into negus, with slices of toasted bread floating at the top. The beverage was vastly pleasant, and promoted the 'hazarder' system capitally, for it made me venture my French at a prodigious rate.

"With these most agreeable folks we stayed a fortnight, including an excursion with two or three of them for a day and a night to Lisle, at the distance of about eighteen miles from their quarters. They made us acquainted with all the superior inhabitants, some of whom were of the *noblesse* in and near the town of Bethune; we attended balls, concerts, and *petits soupers* every night: and, on

* Nor how to spell it: they always write our 'Roast Beef of Old England' as I have given it in the text.

our departure, the brown little French officer, to whose introduction we were indebted for all these *agrémens*, accompanied us to England, whither he went almost every year, when peace between the two countries would permit him.

"The French land-captain was of great assistance to the English sea-captain, in settling our expenses upon the journey, for my companion had been terribly puzzled all the way in referring to the Book of Roads, and in consulting the Ordonnance as to how many *sous*, so he pronounced them, he should give to the post-boys at the end of every stage.*

"Once more in Soho Square, I found my father still firm in his resolution of making me a barrister; but aware of my flights, poetical and others, he was not quite so sanguine, in the fond hope of seeing me on the Woolsack, as many an old simple soul is who sends his plodding prodigy to the Inns of Court. He had been upon the alert in my absence, to effect his intentions, and had taken chambers for me up two pair of stairs in the Temple, having first entered my name as a student at Lincoln's Inn, where I afterwards kept a few Terms by eating oysters,† a custom taken I suppose from the fable,

* It was then, I know not what may be now the custom, for Englishmen to give the post-boys double the sum prescribed by the *ordonnance*.

† The students of Lincoln's Inn keep Term by dining, or pretending to dine, in the Hall during Term-time. Those who feed there, are accommodated, according to the homely fashion of the 'Olden Times,' with wooden trenchers instead of plates, and previously to the dinner, oysters are served up by way of prologue to the play. Eating the oysters, or going into the Hall without eating

and truly emblematical of a law-student's future practice; the whole process consisting in swallowing up the fish, and leaving the shells.

"To the above-mentioned chambers in the King's Bench Walk, my sire consigned me, having first sprinkled them with a prudential paucity of second-hand moveables; a tent bed, two tables, half-a-dozen chairs, and a carpet as much too scanty for the boards as Sheridan's 'rivulet of rhyme' for its 'meadow of margin;' to these he added about ten pounds worth of law books, which had been given to him in his own early Lincoln's-Inn days, by Lord Bath, with which he told me, mentioning the sum he should allow me *pro tempore*, I must work out my fortunes; then, enjoining me to labour hard, he left town upon a party of pleasure."

Mr. Colman however, in the above account, has all along blinked the true cause for this design on the part of his sire for transporting him to Switzerland. It is true, he admits, his father was aware of his flights poetical and others, and that in sending him across the Straits of Dover, there was deeper policy in it than appears upon the surface: the fact was, George had contracted an intimacy with Miss Catherine Morris, an actress belonging to the Haymarket Theatre, which intimacy the father considered it not advisable for him to continue. On his setting out for Paris, he also notices the wariness of his father in not

them if you please, and then departing to dine elsewhere, is quite sufficient for Term-keeping; there is, however, an expense attending all this, for so costly is law, that even its students, like clients, find their pockets the lighter for it.

daring to allow 'so flighty a youth *alone* upon this gay excursion.' Hopes were entertained that a separation for some time, might create a diversion that would end in coolness, and set aside the result which the father feared; and the fixing him in his legal studies would possibly arrest his attention. This was however to little purpose, for no sooner had the elder Colman left his son in the Temple and joined his party, than the immediate consequence was that he joined in a second trip to Scotland with Miss Morris, whom he married at Gretna Green, Oct. 3, 1784. This occasioned something like a hard run on the sum allowed him *pro tempore*, and the apprehensions of his father's resentment on learning his improvidence, impelled a silence on the transaction, for which no favourable opportunity of disclosure occurred till November 1788, when, with the father's sanction, they were publicly married on the 10th of that month at Chelsea Church, and the affair was openly avowed.

Colman the younger thus resumes his narrative:—

"Among the residents in the same staircase, I had the good fortune to find one with whom it was a great pleasure to me, and no less advantage, to cultivate a neighbourly intercourse, which every body will readily conceive, when I mention the name of Jekyll. He made me a welcoming and a welcome visit on my arrival at my new abode; and glancing over the articles of my establishment, observed a piece of frivolity I had brought with me, which must have appeared to him, as he was then practising at the bar, a great interruption to the

study of Coke upon Littleton. This was a round cage with a squirrel in it. He looked for a minute or two, at the little animal which was performing the same operation as a man in the tread-mill, or a donkey in the wheel, and then quietly said, 'Ah! poor devil! he is going the Home Circuit!' if locality can make a good thing better, this technical joke was particularly happy from being uttered in the Temple.

"I commenced my second drama on the morning of the 20th of December, 1784, a remarkable day in the annals of modern learning; for I had not written half an hour when I was interrupted by the intelligence that the funeral procession of the great Doctor Johnson was on its way from his late residence in Bolt Court, down Fleet-street, to Westminster Abbey.

"I threw down the pen, and ran forth from my two pair of stairs chambers in the Temple to gaze at the mournful train attendant upon the corpse of this literary Leviathan; but was disappointed in my expectations of its grandeur. Garrick's sepulchral pomp which I had witnessed five years previously, when I was soon to leave Westminster School, had been much more splendid and imposing.

"The only principal mourners on the present occasion were, I believe, Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great Edmund Burke, Sir John Hawkins, my father, and the deceased Doctor's black man.* Among others who attended were Doctor Horsley, General Paoli, Hoole the translator of Metastasio, with several holders-up of conspicuous authors' tails, I mean

* Francis Barber, his old and faithful servant.

commentators and printers, such as Stevens, Malone, Nichols, and others. But, however inferior to Garrick's funeral solemnities, I deemed Johnson's obsequies fully sufficient, for I was then so bigoted to theatricals that I looked upon the stage as the only field in which the lasting leaves of bay were to be gathered; and I contemplated the mighty Johnson only as a minor dramatist, whose tragedy of Irene had not been so popular as the musical comedy of Two to One!

"It did not then occur to me, or at least I left it out of the account, that his prologue for opening Drury Lane theatre, in 1747, was a specimen of dramatic poetry to live in fame for ages; that he had besides acquired a vast stock of erudition, that he had put forth the stupendous labour of his English Dictionary, that his moral and political writings, his poems entitled 'London,' and the Vanity of Human Wishes, his Rasselas, his Rambler, his Preface to Shakspeare's Works, and his Lives of the Poets, were each of them, separately, enough to immortalize a memory. Alas! alas! I thought not of all this, nor of any thing much, at that time, but myself and my musical comedy; and when a play scribbling younker is inflated with a little temporary or rather trumpery success, he may, like a lover described by the bard,

> Bestride the gossamer,
> And yet not fall, so light is vanity!

"While in this state of vain-glorious intoxication, I attributed, of course, all the applause my first production had obtained purely to its own intrinsic

merits; not setting down one particle of the approbation to encouragement bestowed on boyish promise. On the contrary, I conceived that, having once felt the pulse of the public, I was thoroughly acquainted with its constitution; that I had taken measure of the town's taste, and knowing now exactly how to fit it, I could lead the play-going world in a string. Oho! said I mentally, if Two to One has tickled them so much, I shall tickle them a great deal more the next time: so down I sat again on my return from the Doctor's funeral procession to be most inveterately comical, and even to outdo myself.

"I did outdo myself at a furious rate! I doubled all the faults of my first composition in my second. Instead of splashing carelessly with a light brush, I now deliberately laid it on with a trowel; to say nothing of the flimsiness and improbability of my plot I laboured so much to sparkle in dialogue, studied so deeply for antitheses, quibbles, and puns,

'And glittering thoughts struck out at every line,'

that I produced a very puerile and contemptible performance, a second musical comedy in three acts, under the title of 'Turk and no Turk.'

"This piece however was received much better than it deserved, and without one dissentient voice, on July 9th; it was acted however only ten nights in the summer of 1785; and, to the very slight scratch my *amour propre* received, but which I would not confess scarcely to myself, I applied the flattering unction from Horace of *decies repetita placebit:*

but I could not be so blinded by youthful coxcombry as not to suspect that I had been a little mistaken in the measure I had taken of the town.

" Several years after this, when I became manager of the Haymarket theatre, I raked out this same play from the Prompter's closet, in hopes that it might be useful as junk, and as there was some sprightly music in it, would cut down to a good actable farce. I read it, blushed, and tore the copy to tatters. The Prompter told me that there was no other copy remaining, and that I had made a breach in the archives of the Little theatre; I heartily hope and trust that he was correct in his statement.*

" Wretched as the above effort was, I must in my earlier days have had some right notions of dramatic construction, otherwise I could not have succeeded at all; and, having succeeded, it is no wonder that I could not at once see all my very great deficiencies; when so many who have not the remotest idea of what is fit for the stage, complain vehemently of their dramas having been rejected.

" My ' Turk and no Turk,' doffed his turban to make room for Mrs. Inchbald's ' I'll Tell you What,' a five-act comedy of much merit; which was, on its first production, excellently acted in most of its characters. Among the prominent performers in this play, were Palmer, Parsons, Bensley, Mrs. Stephen Kemble, and I forget the rest. It had lain

* Colman has here effected a flourish upon fancy, and has written what was not strictly true. The transcript, with his own autograph corrections, was among those Manuscripts presented by Mrs. Colman, to the Duke of Devonshire.

for some time in the dark, upon the manager's shelf, like a jewel in the ground, and there it would probably, have lain for some time longer, if the success of her farce, 'The Mogul Tale,' had not roused his attention to the authoress's talents; this induced him to revise the dormant manuscript, and to produce it to the public.

"Besides Mrs. Inchbald's good play, and my own bad one, there was no novelty worth mentioning this summer at the Haymarket Theatre, except 'Here and There and Everywhere,' a speaking pantomime, which did not speak much for itself in the representation.

"The Theatre in September, 1785, having closed its season on the 15th, as usual, my father went to Margate, which was his favourite watering-place.* He had not gone to the coast as an invalid, but for the first three weeks, or rather more, after his coming to Margate, he bathed daily in the sea, from which he apparently derived much benefit, and felt, as he repeatedly said, that he was laying in a stock of health for the ensuing winter.

"One morning on his return in high spirits from the bath, he could not help observing, as he sat down

* Our readers must not picture Margate as it at present stands. They must imagine at the period we mention it as a little quiet sea-bathing place, visited by those who *would* venture by water, in what were commonly called the 'Hoys,' with some delay, and even sea-sickness. Now the celerity of the steam-boats, their excellent accommodation, the restricted prices, enable everybody to take a healthful trip; and where in the year 1785, two hundred persons visited, we may safely say five thousand may now be enumerated, as "birds of passage."

before the glass to shave, the improvement in his looks; and, having performed the usual operations of the toilette, he ate a remarkably hearty breakfast. His carriage then came to the door, in which he was to take his friend Doctor Arnold, who had been on a visit to him, as far as Canterbury, on his way to London.

"Arnold had already stepped into the carriage, and my father was following him, when he recollected that he had left a small bunch of keys which he always carried in his pocket, on the table of his dressing-room; he returned for them into the house, and was ascending the staircase, at a quick pace, when he was seized with paralysis; one half of his frame was severely affected, the limbs on that side had entirely lost their power; and, on the other side, he held by the railing of the stairs, unable to call for assistance.

"In this deplorable situation he was discovered by his valet-de-chambre, who happened to be coming down; and when supported by the servant, my poor father instinctively put up that hand which had escaped the shock to his face, that he might ascertain, as he afterwards told me, whether the mouth and features had suffered; but in that instance, it had pleased Providence to spare him.

"By this time, the alarm had been given in the house, by the servant's cry for help. Arnold, who unluckily in such a conjecture, was not a Doctor of Medicine, but a Doctor of Music, rushed from the carriage to his friend; and, having seen him conveyed to bed, hurried out for a medical practitioner,

with whom he and my father were acquainted, and who was residing *pro tempore* in the neighbourhood.

"This gentleman was a Doctor R., I shall not give his name at full. He was a protégé of the late Lord Abingdon, through whom my father first knew him ;* he was also, like many of his learned brethren of Warwick-lane, who overstock the town, by no means encumbered with patients, and therefore visited Margate during the season, upon the speculation of meliorating his fortunes by picking up customers. At certain periods of the year, a London physician in want of employment is as naturally stationed at a watering-place as an empty hackney-coach is drawn up on the stand ; and as to the articles thus severally in waiting for a fee and a fare, whether we call a coach or a doctor, the chances are against our getting a good one.

"Whatever Doctor R.'s skill might have been, I do not pretend to determine, but he proceeded to act upon my father with that decisive energy which may, perhaps, be requisite in a case where life or death must be set upon a cast. He was very profuse in blistering the patient, which for aught I know might have been perfectly proper ; the application, however, of these stimulants was followed by great excitement ; and my father was for two or three days in a state of something more than delirium ; in his paroxysms he tore off the blisters, and expressed his

* The late Lord Abingdon had a passion for music, and Doctor R. was so thorough a disciple of Apollo, that he studied both physicking and fiddling ; *in utrumque paratus ;* hence the Peer's patronage of the Doctor.

abhorrence of the doctor in terms of fury. Before my arrival at Margate, his disorder had fluctuated; sometimes he raged, then subsided into a sullen calm for some hours, then raged again; and for a week or two after my arrival, the same frightful symptoms of a disturbed judgment now and then recurred.

"About three weeks or a month after his departure from town, I was thrown into great alarm by the arrival of a messenger sent express, with the intelligence that my father had been suddenly taken ill, that the delay of some days in apprising me of it had arisen from the hope of his getting better, and the desire to spare me from a shock before there was an actual necessity for it; but that now he was so much worse that his life was in imminent danger.

"This afflicting news reached me about ten o'clock at night; and before eleven, I was in a post-chaise with Jewell the treasurer, my old hack travelling companion upon all emergencies, on the high road to Margate.

"Travelling in the dead of night when darkness is unpropitious to speed, and without an *avant courier* to rouse the slumbering retainers of the different inns, that relays might be ready against our arrival, considerably retarded a progress which required more than common expedition: we lost nearly half an hour at the end of every stage in changing horses; and it was between ten and eleven o'clock in the forenoon, before we were set down at the house which my father had hired in Margate.

"My anxiety was a little relieved on finding that he had passed a tolerably tranquil night, and that

the apprehension of immediate danger was not so great as on the previous day. I hastened to his bedside, he could speak but little; and, indeed, orders had been given that he should be kept as quietly as possible, and prevented from talking at all: he informed me, however, that he was extremely discontented with the medical adviser who had been called in, that he had quarrelled with him, but that he still continued to attend. A quarrrel under such circumstances seemed very strange; and it then occurred to me for the first time, that in the agitation of the moment, and the hurry of leaving town, I had been guilty of a most absurd omission, by bringing the playhouse treasurer with me instead of a physician; it was like running to assist at a conflagration without an engine, or a single bucket of water to extinguish the flames.

"To repair this blunder Jewell was instantly put upon the fatiguing duty of returning to London with instructions to bring back with him Doctor Warren, the Sir Henry Halford of his day, if his aid could be procured; and of which I had some faint hope, notwithstanding his great practice, as he was one of my father's old friends, and his associate in the Literary Club; or if such attendance could not be had, to obtain that of some other gentlemen of the faculty whom Doctor Warren might recommend.

"When Jewell had started, which was in about an hour after we had arrived, I then heard the details of what had happened, and which I have related.

"Doctor Warren's extensive practice would not admit of his leaving London, but he had recom-

mended a learned brother who had accompanied him, Jewell, from London. This *locum tenens* of Warren was Dr. Harvey; the registrar I believe, at that time, of the College of Physicians, a gentleman of repute in his profession, and of formality in his appearance. He seemed to cherish those outward personal dignities which had even then almost disappeared of the old school doctors; and wore a grave suit in which he might have gone to court instead of coming to Margate, with his hair in a bag. Jewell and he formed a grotesque pair of travelling companions; the treasurer's nankeens and blue silk stockings were a fine contrast to the registrar's full dressed sad-coloured * clothes, his stand-up collar, his three cut steel buttons on the cuffs of his coat, and his three more on the flaps of each pocket over his rump.

"When Dr. Harvey had made his appearance, Dr. R. retreated in dudgeon. I do not mean to hold up this last gentleman as the most luminous among the descendants of Æsculapius, but I doubt whether he was fairly treated; for much obloquy was cast upon him by my father, who talked loudly of his deficiencies in professional skill; such evidence, however was not only *ex-parte*, but questionable on the score of *mens sana* in the witness; and, therefore, should not have been admitted to the prejudice of a physician's reputation.

"Be this as it may, whatever had been the merits

* *Sad*, in olden times was synonymous with dark—"I met him accidentally in London in sad-coloured clothes."

Walton's Life of Bishop Sanderson.

or errors of Doctor R.'s system, Doctor Harvey proceeded upon opposite principles, which were more successful: insomuch that after a stay of two or three days, finding he had removed all danger, he returned to town; repeating his visits to Margate, costly visits for the sick! once a week for the space of a month, and then pronounced the patient equal to a removal to London, and to the resumption of his worldly avocations.

"I was not aware while he lived, that my father, previously to 1789, had certain moments of secret despondency, arising from a consciousness that, however long he might linger, the blow which he had received from paralysis was the dismal harbinger of death; but on looking over some of his papers which came into my possession, I found a trait which convinced me of it.

"He had long been in the habit of purchasing those annual pocket-books with pages arranged for the insertion of short memoranda, and was very precise in making entries of his dinner engagements, and various casual occurrences; in his book for 1785, he had particularly noted the day of the month on which he was so suddenly stricken by disease, and under it there appeared, in very large characters of his own writing,

'HÆRET LATERI LETHALIS ARUNDO:'

his adoption of this half line from Virgil, presenting the picture of a wounded deer still ranging the forest, with the deadly arrow sticking in its side, was too plainly allusive to himself to be mistaken: and

too mournfully expressive of his feelings to fail of giving a shock to my own.

"In the last fortnight of my father's convalescence at Margate, 'the clouds that lowered upon our house' were not exactly 'in the deep bosom of the Ocean buried,' although the Ocean was so near; but all apprehensions for the time being dissipated, I resumed my cheerfulness, took my morning rides to Ramsgate, Broadstairs, &c., went to the libraries and the Assembly-room, and even began to crack my juvenile and ill-judged jokes on his medical attendant, the solemn Doctor Harvey; jokes which were very ill taken if taken at all.

"If my attempts at pleasantry were unacceptable or incomprehensible to the Doctor, they were better understood but much worse received by the Apothecary—I beg pardon, I should have put Surgeon before Apothecary, and Accoucheur after it, for so did this personage designate himself. He was a constant resident at Margate, and kept one of those show-shops for chymicals and galenicals which you pass at night, in peril of being blinded by the glare of cochineal and other dies from huge globular glass bottles stuck up in the windows, while those in the dark who espy you at a distance, take you for a red man, or a green, or a blue, or an orange-tawny. His name was Silver, and when things began to go well, he dropped in only twice in the twenty-four hours to inquire 'How are we to-day?' and 'How do we feel ourselves this evening?' Previously to this, he had been in daily attendance for hours together.

"I had but one solitary jest to shoot off against this Knight of the Pestle; but from its repetition and its absurdity, it excited great irritation in the party at whom it was levelled; it consisted simply in applying to Mr. Silver the old Proverb which states, 'that all is not gold that glitters,' and in pronouncing it according to the orthography of former days, of which we have innumerable instances in the old authors, particularly in Shakspeare, who introduces this very adage in his Merchant of Venice, where the Prince of Morocco reads a scroll contained in one of Portia's caskets, beginning with

'All that glisters is not gold.'

"Wherever I met Mr. Silver, whether I met him in my father's chamber, or popped upon him at the turning of a corner in Margate, which happened at least ten times a-day, I was always sure to salute him with, 'Mr. Silver, all is not gold,' &c., and he was as sure to answer in great wrath, 'Sir, you have told me that before.' He must have hated me in his heart; had I 'needed poison,' he would have been not only 'the caitiff wretch to sell it me,' but to give it me for nothing. Between my extreme nonsense, and his being in a passion at it, it may be difficult to say which was the greatest fool of the two.

"Even Jewell, who remained with us, grew facetious, and hazarded a fling or two at the Margate Galen; but Monsieur l'Apothicaire beat him out of the field at raillery, an easy victory, though the conqueror always celebrated it by a triumph.

Jewell's great delight, while here, was a morning dip in the sea; he preferred it at this place particularly, because, as he said, 'the machines had got a *yawning*,' by which he meaned those tilts thrown out at the end of the vehicle to screen the bather from view, and protect him from the weather, commonly called an awning.

"Among my father's friends who were then at Margate, and who first made congratulatory visits to him on the improving state of his health, were Messrs. Bearcroft and George Keate. The first of these, Bearcroft, had attained celebrity at the bar, and was at that time of I know not what rank in his profession; I have no documents on my table to ascertain the honours in jurisprudence to which he arrived, and I humbly submit, that it is not incumbent upon me to hunt after them.

"The time was now ripe for bringing my father to London; he was conveyed thither without fatigue, by breaking the journey into easy divisions; he slept on the first night at Sittingbourne, on the next at Dartford, and on the third day he reached his house in Soho Square, but sadly altered from the time of his leaving it, in the short space of two months. He came home wrapped in flannels, the limbs of half his body lifeless, and the deadly arrow to which he had so gloomily alluded, rankling in his side!

"I have always dated the beginning of his derangement from the time of this illness, and considered it as the prologue to the tragedy which followed. I am confirmed in this opinion by all

the professional men who were consulted on the occasion.

"His case was simply this; he had gout in his habit, which had been indicated so slightly, that he neglected the hints to take care of himself which nature had mildly thrown out. Cold bathing is perhaps one of the most dangerous luxuries in which an elderly man can indulge, when so formidable an enemy is lurking in his constitution. The gout having been repelled by repeated submersion in the sea, not only paralyzed the body, but distempered the brain, and Reason was subverted.

"But, from the earliest sparks of his disorder at the end of 1785, till it blazed forth unequivocally in June 1789, an interval of rather more than three years and a half, and again from the last mentioned year to the time of his decease, there was nothing of that 'second childishness and mere oblivion,' which his biographers have attached to his memory.

"The assertion that his gradually increasing derangement left him in 'a state of idiotism,' is directly the reverse of fact. His mind, instead of having grown progressively vacant till it became a blank, was, in the last stages of his malady, filled, like a cabalistic book, with delusions, and crowded with the wildest flights of morbid fancy; it was always active, always on the stretch; and, so far from his exhibiting that moping fatuity which obscured the last sad and silent days of Swift, it might have been said of him, 'how pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness which reason and sanity would not so prosperously be delivered of.'

"It must be admitted that on his coming to town, after his partial recovery from his severe illness at Margate, he was not so capable of directing his domestic affairs and managing his dramatic business as previously; he might even discover to those who had opportunities of observing him closely, the marks of approaching distraction, but not the advance of infantile imbecility: he also suffered under several fits of epilepsy; when the greatest alertness was exercised by plunging him instantly into a hot slipper-bath to prevent the immediate termination of his existence; but, whenever free from these attacks, he was busily occupied in preparing for his summer seasons in the Haymarket theatre, and in writing.

"His spirit struggled against disease, and he insisted upon pursuing his wonted avocations. No one about him could then control his will; but, in the business of his theatre, in which he continued to exert himself beyond his strength, I endeavoured, as far as I could, and with due respect, to assist him without appearing to do so, for he was extremely jealous of the least interference in his concerns."

CHAPTER VII.

1785—1794.

Horace Walpole—William Cowper—Charles Bannister—Colman's Publications after his Illness—The Royalty Theatre—John Palmer—Mrs. Gibbs—Master Braham, and Signora Storace—Cumberland—Miss Farren—The Country Attorney—Inkle and Yarico—Jekyll—Ways and Means—Epilogue—Relapse of Colman—Colman, Junior, manages the Haymarket—Miles, Peter Andrews — William Augustus Miles — Miss George—Dreadful Catastrophe at the Haymarket—Death of the Elder Colman—List of his Dramas—John Bannister—New Drury.

The following letter to George Colman the elder, from Horace Walpole, accompanied a presentation copy, by him, of the Duc de Nivernois' 'Translation of Walpole's Essay on Modern Gardening.' The original and the version are printed together on alternate pages. Walpole had a press in his house at Strawberry-hill, among other little conceits in his villa.

"Sir, Strawberry-hill, Sept. 19, 1785.

"I beg your acceptance of a little work just printed here, and I offer it as a token of my gratitude, not as pretending to pay you for your last present. A translation however excellent from a very inferior Horace, would be a

most inadequate return ; but there is so much merit in the inclosed version, the language is so pure and the imitations of our poets so extraordinary, so much more faithful and harmonious than I thought the French tongue could achieve, that I flatter myself you will excuse my troubling you with an old performance of my own when newly dressed by a master hand. As, too, there are not a great many copies printed, and those only for presents, I have particular pleasure in making you one of the earliest compliments,

And am, Sir, your most obliged,

And obedient humble servant,

HORACE WALPOLE."

The intimacy which had subsisted between Colman and Cowper, appears to have ceased at the period when, in December 1763, the pure mind of the latter sunk under the severest sufferings of morbid depression, partly arising from the terrors of his appointment of Reading Clerk, and Clerk of the Private Committees of the House of Lords. His tranquillity was at length restored, and he recovered from the anxiously dreaded mental derangement in which he seemed engulphed. In August 1785, Cowper, in a letter to his friend Unwin, observes,— "I have had more comfort, far more comfort, in the connexions that I have formed within the last twenty years, than in the more numerous ones which I had before." The fame of the second volume of his poems, then recently published, now suggested the idea that some profit might be achieved in the publication by subscription of his translation of Homer. Accordingly we find him busy in all directions, soliciting the comforting co-operation of even

the by-gone friends of his early days. Cowper's letter to Unwin, dated December 24, 1785, expresses his determination to abide by his purpose of the subscription, notwithstanding Johnson the publisher's advice to the contrary. He adds, "I met with encouragement from all quarters, such as I find need of indeed in an enterprise of such length and moment, but such as at the same time I find effectual. Homer is not a poet to be translated under the disadvantage of doubts and dejection!"

In this exigency Cowper thus addressed the friend of his early days:

"Dear Colman, Olney, Bucks, Dec. 27, 1785.

"For though we have not had any intercourse for more than twenty years, I cannot find in my heart to address you by any other style; and I am the rather encouraged to the use of that in which I formerly addressed you, by a piece of intelligence that I received not long since from my friend Hill,* who told me that you had inquired after me of him, and had said something about an intention to write to me. I took pretty good care that you should not be ignorant of my having commenced author, by sending you my volume. The reason why I did not send you my second was, because you omitted to send me your Art of Poetry, which in a splenetic mood I suppose, I construed into a prohibition; but Hill's subsequent information has cured me of that malady, so far as you were concerned.

"Once an author and always an author. This you know, my friend, is an axiom and admits of no dispute; in

* Joseph Hill, Esq., who, with Lord Chancellor Thurlow, was one of Cowper's earliest associates, and continued to be his confidential correspondent through life. His name appears in the second volume of Cowper's Poem, prefixed to some verses of exquisite elegance.

my instance at least it is likely to hold good, for I have more leisure than it is possible to dispose of without writing. Accordingly I write every day, and have every day been writing since I last published, till at last I have made such progress in a new translation of Homer into blank verse, that I am upon the point of publishing again.* Hitherto I have given away my copies, but having indulged myself in that frolic twice, I now mean to try whether it may not prove equally agreeable to get something by the bargain. I come, therefore, humbly to solicit your vote and interest, and to beg that you will help me in the circulation of my proposals, for I shall print by subscription. On such occasions you know a man sets every wheel in motion, and it would be strange indeed, if not having a great many wheels to move, I should leave unattempted so important a one as yourself. As soon as I have your permission I shall order my bookseller to send you some papers.

"The news informed me of your illness, which gave me true concern, for time alone cannot efface the traces of such a friendship as I have felt for you, no, nor even time with distance to help it. The news also told me that you were better, but to find that you are perfectly recovered, and to see it under your own hand will give the greatest pleasure to one, who can honestly subscribe himself to this day,

Your very affectionate,

Wm. Cowper.

"I enclose this with a letter to Johnson, my publisher, to whom I am obliged to have recourse for your address."

Colman had at this period a disagreement with the elder Bannister (his principal bass singer), as

* Cowper in a letter to Park, written in March 1792, recounts the events of his youth as sport in frivolities:—"At fifty years of age I commenced an author: it is a whim that has served me longest and best, and will probably be my last!"

the following letter addressed to Dr. Arnold will evince.

"DEAR ARNOLD, Bath, April 13, 1786.

"Bannister after entering into and indeed writing another treaty, has at length broken off in so insolent and scandalous manner, that I really should be sorry to agree with him. In the list of inquirers after me in Soho Square, I have Reinhold's name; for I suppose it must be our vocal friend. If you think him well and able, and if he can come to town for the summer, as I see he intended for the Lent, I can certainly make it well worth his while to pass the season at the Haymarket. The sooner our agreement is made, if made at all, the better; because it then will be clear that Bannister, by mere impudence and unprincipled impertinence has shut himself out of the theatre.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Arnold, Great Pulteney Street, Golden Square. G. COLMAN."

Colman produced a variety of miscellaneous poems and papers, which he republished, in three volumes, in 1787, a year or two before what may be termed his intellectual demise. As a scholar, he holds a very respectable rank, by his translation of the comedies of Terence, and Horace's Art of Poetry. The reader of almost every periodical publication of note,* has been indebted to him also for much information and amusement.

Of his father's literary occupations and health at this time, George Colman, junior, thus speaks:

"During the period, from the beginning of 1786

* More especially the St. James's Chronicle.

to 1789, he published two or three volumes of Miscellanies, consisting partly of his old fugitive poetry and prose, and partly of new matter; he composed a pamphlet containing 'Some Particulars of his Life,' to be edited, as a posthumous memoir, by his executor. He constructed also a slight musical entertainment,* in one act, founded on one of Hogarth's prints, and successfully produced it at his own theatre, only one month before his ultimate confinement, when the Court of Chancery placed his person and estate under my care. Did all this look like a gradual descent to drivelling? a term which, let me be permitted to acknowledge, I cannot quote, when applied to my father, without impatience and disgust.

"I may be asked, however, what was his state of mind after I had the care of him; that question I answer by recording a very extraordinary effort of his brain, while in such a situation.

"He had often comparatively lucid intervals of days and weeks; during one of these he inquired of me the fate of my play called 'The Battle of Hexham,' which had been recently brought out, and was my first attempt at that mixed kind of drama. I gave him some account of it, when he said, 'George, I will show you how such a piece ought to be written;' and, in about a week afterwards, he put into my hand a one act drama which he had just finished, on a subject selected from the Arabian

* Called "*Ut Pictura Poesis;* or, the Enraged Musician."

Nights' Entertainments; it was in perfectly regular and well measured blank verse, the story was clearly told, and the conduct of the scenes altogether evinced the stage knowledge of a practised veteran; sometimes there were strange romantic thoughts and rhapsodies, which betrayed an imagination influenced by the moon; but they manifested anything rather than intellect involved in the darkness of idiotic night."

Nothing remarkable occurred until June 1787, when Mr. John Palmer opened the Royalty Theatre, in Wellclose-square, Goodman's Fields, under the idea that the magistrates of the Tower Hamlets were empowered by the royalty of that fortress to license the performance of plays. Messrs. Harris, Linley, and Colman persisted in a determination to oppose the speculation. On the opening night, Palmer read an address to the audience, in which he stated that

"This theatre was built under a letter of approbation from the Lieutenant Governor of the Tower; and being situated in a palace and fortress, in a district immediately within his jurisdiction, his consent, added to a licence obtained from the magistrates, authorising a place of public entertainment, was deemed legal authority.

"The first stone of the building was laid on the 26th of December, 1785; at that time the managers of the theatres at the West end of the town, made no kind of objection. In the course of last summer when I performed at the little Theatre in the Haymarket, Mr. Colman wrote a prologue, which I

spoke on my benefit night; and among others, were the following lines:

> "For me, whose utmost aim is your delight,
> Accept the humble offering of this night;
> To please, wherever plac'd, be still my care,
> At Drury, Haymarket, or Wellclose Square."

Colman to exculpate himself from the charge in these lines, inserted a paragraph in the public prints, declaring that he did it in consequence of Mr. Palmer's statement that he had sufficient authority for his plan, and that as he did not intend to open his new theatre in the summer, he of course could not interfere with the interests of the Haymarket house, whereas Mr. Palmer, in contradiction to his promise, opened in June.

A threatening notice, moreover, signed by Thomas Linley, Thomas Harris, and George Colman, acquainted Palmer that instructions were given "to lodge informations against him for every appearance he should make in any play, or scene of a play, at any unlicensed theatre, contrary to the statute." This alarmed Palmer, and he closed the Royalty until July 3, when he re-opened it with a variety of musical, scenic, and pantomimic exhibitions. In his company, at that time, were the elder Bannister, Leoni the singer, his pupil master Braham, Mrs. Gibbs, then very young, and Mrs. Wells. Miss Wilkinson, afterwards Mrs. Mountain, also performed at the Royalty Theatre.

On April 21, 1787, Braham appeared at Covent Garden Theatre for the first time on any stage, for

the benefit of Leoni. "At the end of the opera," observes a critic of the day, "Master Braham, a pupil of Leoni, sung 'The Soldier Tir'd,' with excellent taste and judgment. His voice is clear and harmonious, free and unembarrassed in his person, with an open countenance. There cannot be a doubt of his becoming a great favourite of the public." Upon this trial, Palmer engaged Braham for the Royalty Theatre.

It is worthy of remark, that in the same week Signora Storace made her first appearance at the Italian Opera, in Paesiello's Opera 'Gli Schiavi per Amore.' She was the daughter of Storace, the predecessor of Gariboldi on the bass, and her mother was the sister of Dr. Trusler. She had every foreign advantage, and among the best, the school of Allegranti. Her lower notes were the best. Though not beautiful, she was interesting. She had then the *en bon point charmante* of twenty-two.

It is an odd circumstance, considering the long subsequent connection between Mr. Braham and Madame Storace, that they should have made their *débuts,* before the London public within three days of each other.

A comedy by Cumberland, entitled 'The Country Attorney,' was played for the first time, on Saturday, July 7, 1787. The author in his Memoirs,* simply notices the fact, that he brought it out at the summer theatre when it was under the direction of

* Vol. II., p. 278.

the elder Mr. Colman. Miss Farren, afterwards Countess of Derby, appears to have thrown some obstacle, amounting almost to a refusal of the part for which she was cast, and Colman wrote to the author to intimate his purpose that Mrs. Brooks should play the character. We here give Cumberland's reply.

"Saturday Morning, June 30, 1787.

"My Dear Sir,

"Miss Farren is a spoiled child, and has done us more mischief by her hesitation than she could have done by a more peremptory refusal. I never saw Mrs. Brooks, but cannot doubt your judgment in putting the part into her hands, and shall thoroughly approve of whatever you direct. At the same time, if you think that the cast throughout is such as to make the success more doubtful than ought to be risked, I shall perfectly acquiesce in your opinion for withdrawing it. On the contrary, if you approve of its representation, I have not the least hesitation about any cast you shall give it, nor shall ever impute its failure to any cause but its own weakness. I own I shall be truly sorry to give a blow to your theatre, when I am so anxious to contribute the best help in my power. If Bannister is pleasant with his part, I think we have no great cause to fear, and I shall cheerfully come forward. Mrs. Brooks's part is so short that she will not impede the production, and I hope Mr. Aickin is now content; I presume he is, by your not mentioning anything to the contrary.

"With respect to an epilogue, I was in hopes you would have given me one; I am a very bad hand at it myself, and if your business is too pressing to turn your thoughts to the task, perhaps you can find a friendly poet in the humour to help us. In the mean time I will tack a few rhymes

together as well as I can, and send them up to you, that no stop may be made at all events.

I am, with great sincerity,
Dear Sir,
Your most faithful and obliged humble servant,
R. Cumberland."

Colman thought the flirtation of the actress might be subdued by a solicitation from the author, when little was to be expected from the interference of the manager, and suggested that proceeding to Cumberland, who in reply communicated a transcript of his application, which it must be confessed is rather *toady*. Perhaps it was the fashion of the authors of that day, or the chance might be, that Cumberland, as an old stager, outdid his brethren by flattery, but it was to him, as the creator of a work, a debasement.

"Dear Sir,

"In obedience to your commands I write this very morning to Miss Farren as follows:

"As you are born to have all mankind at your feet, you will not refuse the addresses of an old poet, who is as much devoted to your fame as any man can be. I am convinced that it is not in my power either to write it up or to write it down; that having tried hard for the former attempt in the character of Lady Paragon, I now put your excellence to the proof, by desiring you to convince the town that Lady Rustic cannot diminish your reputation with the public, and will greatly add to your private merits by protecting the weak and feeble, who cannot stand without your support.

"Your hesitation to receive it shows only your judgment, but your acceptance will be a proof of your good

nature. Now I am so certain that the latter motive will prevail with you for condescending to my humble Rustic, that I anticipate my thanks, and accept the favour as one which I shall strain my powers in future to repay, &c."

"I hope my suit will mollify, and I really do not doubt it. I thank you for the hint.

Adieu,

R. CUMBERLAND."

Miss Farren, on certain conditions, relented, and Colman apprised the author of the terms. To this communication Cumberland thus replied :

"Tunbridge Wells, Tuesday, 11 o'clock,

"MY DEAR SIR, July 3, 1787.

"I have just received your letter signifying Miss Farren's commands for transposing her introductory scene to the second act; be it so, but I conclude it will be done with the hand of a master, or that you will transpose it yourself, therefore I rest in peace. For heaven's sake write her an Epilogue. I have plunged from thought to thought in the profound of nonsense, and can fix on nothing; one sense is left me, the sense of your kindness.

Farewell,

R. CUMBERLAND."

The Country Attorney was produced on Saturday, July 7, 1787, and assisted by the acting of Messrs. Bensley, Aickin, Kemble, R. Palmer, and Bannister junior, Miss Farren, and Mrs. Bulkley, with an epilogue written for the heroine by Colman, it was played a few nights, but does not appear to have been very successful. On this subject Cumberland addressed the following letter to Colman :

"I have so long been the public aim of newspaper virulence, that they have familiarised a nature originally too sensitive, and cured me of my feelings by the force of corrosives. I read with indignation the pert malevolence of the papers against my friends, but in my own particular, I expect the lash, and have learned to bear it.

"I am glad to see that the Morning Chronicle has spoken so handsomely of the performers, and readily forgive the humiliating account he has published of the author's performance. But of this more than enough.

"Farewell, my dear Sir, and ever believe me,

Your most faithful friend and obliged servant,

R. CUMBERLAND."

To George Colman, Esq.

"Tuesday 10th July, 1787, T. Wells.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I return you my best thanks for your most kind letter, containing the account of the favourable reception given to my comedy. Whatever favour was bestowed upon it, must be derived from your friendly attention and judicious support of it, and to the correct and able representation which the performers gave to a piece which owed its merit to their exhibition. I beg you will present my warmest thanks and acknowledgments to them, assuring them of my sensibility on the occasion.

"As for your part, my dear Sir, from beginning to end, it has been such as leaves the most lively impressions on my heart towards you. I wish the production had been more deserving of you, but the zeal of its author will, in your estimation, make up all deficiencies in the work itself. Your generous feelings point to an object, which is truly the least in my thoughts, except for those purposes in which I am not interested and you are. If my efforts are acceptable, and if it is the least satisfaction to your mind, to be certified of the real attachment and esteem which I entertain in mine

for you, and all your undertakings, I rejoice on this occasion of expressing them to you.

" I am going to-morrow into Hampshire, and my direction is, at Mrs. Bludworth's, Holt, Winchester, where a line from you will be most pleasing to me. Thank you for your Epilogue, which I see with pleasure is highly commended in the public prints. I read my own condemnation in the same period, but I turn to your letter, and take comfort."

George Colman the younger, produced his excellent drama of ' Inkle and Yarico, during this season. He thus alludes to it :

" The wise old saws against precipitancy in taking a wife hold equally good, perhaps, in respect to the indeliberate choice of an occupation. Certain it is, that many a professed scribbler, grown threadbare and grey in his improvident calling, laments that he was ever wedded to the Nine, (polygamy, remember, is allowed in Parnassus,) and feels the force of those two admonitory maxims, ' Look before you Leap,' and ' Marry in Haste, to Repent at Leisure.' Hence it might be argued, that becoming either a husband or a poet, without due deliberation, may amount to much the same thing.

" But I did not very soon regret the rash step I had taken in abandoning the heavy studies of the law, for the lighter labours of the drama. Prosperity, and youthful spirits, protracted my honeymoon with the scenic Muses ; yet alas ! all honeymoons are fleeting in their nature, and are consequently doomed to wane.

" Besides the treat of Jekyll's good jokes, I had the benefit of his good advice, as far as it related to

the drama, exclusively; for he had the patience to hear me read, at intervals, scenes from two of my plays as I was proceeding in them, these plays were 'Inkle and Yarico;' and 'Ways and Means,' and I profited much by his criticism.

"It is pretty plain, from the above instance of my friend Jekyll's kindness, that I was writing for the theatre, when I should have been reading for the bar. In fact, I abandoned all appearance of forensic studies, after a very slight show of pursuing them; nor could much paternal anger be consistently expressed at this relinquishment of my calling for an idle trade, since 'my father did so before me.'

"The opera of 'Inkle and Yarico,' owes its origin to a page or two in the Spectator; in these, and other instances, where I adopted less limited though not extensive ground-works, I found, or fancied I found, that, however eligible the subjects which I borrowed, if the loans had been larger, I should have been duller.

"Critics have been pleased to observe, that it was a good hit when I made Inkle offer Yarico for sale to the person whom he afterwards discovers to be his intended father-in-law. The hit, good or bad, only occurred to me when I came to that part of the piece in which it is introduced, and arose from the accidental turn which I had given to previous scenes; as it is not in the original story, it would, in all probability, not have occurred to me while coldly preparing an elaborate prospectus; and such a prospectus once made, it is ten to one that I should have followed it mechanically.

"After the commencement of my course as an avowed author for the stage, the first check which my ardour experienced, was in the production of my fourth play, called 'Ways and Means,' which encountered some opposition, on the night of its probation;* this opposition was by no means what sailors would call a downright gale of wind, but the weather was squally, and not at all pleasant to a young navigator, who had performed three previous voyages, in perfectly untroubled waters; the little vessel, however, rode it out gallantly.

"The epilogue, written by myself, was taken in high dudgeon by the newspaper writers, whom it somewhat impoliticly ridiculed, and they joined common cause, by endeavouring to run down the piece, with much acrimony, in almost all their journals. Let the reader judge, from the following extract, what offence this same epilogue, which was spoken by Palmer, in the character of a newspaper critic, must have given to the gentlemen of the press:

"I am a critic, my masters! I sneer, splash, and vapour,
Puff parties, damn poets; in short, *do* a paper.
My name's Johnny Grub—I'm a vender of Scandal;
My pen, like an auctioneer's hammer, I handle,
Knocking down reputations, by one inch of candle.†

* July 10, 1788. It was first written by him in four acts, and entitled 'More Ways than Means,' afterwards reduced to three acts, as played, and called 'Ways and Means.' The original in Colman's autograph, as first produced, with a copy as now altered, are among the manuscripts presented by Mrs. Colman to the Duke of Devonshire.

† This it is to be feared is incorrect. The old fashion of 'Sale by Candle,' probably precluded the use of the hammer; and the purchase of the lot, I believe, was decided by the going out of the candle, without the rap of the auctioneer.

I 've heard out the play, yet I need not have come?
I 'll tell you a secret, my masters, but mum!
Though ramm'd in amongst you, to praise or to mock it,
I brought my critique, cut and dry in my pocket:
We great paper editors—strange it appears!
Can often, believe me, dispense with our ears.
The author, like all other authors, well-knowing
That we are the people to set him a-going,
Has begg'd me, just now, in a flattering tone,
To publish a friendly critique, of his own:
Ev'ry good has its evil—we don't pay a souse,
Neither *we*, nor our friends, to come into the House;
But then, 'tis expected, because we are *free*,
We are bound to praise all the damn'd nonsense we see:
Hence comes it, the Houses, their emptiness scorning,
At low ebb at night, *overflow* in the morning!
Hence audiences, seated at ease, at the play,
Are squeezed to a mummy, poor devils, next day!
While self-praising authors write volumes on volumes,
And puffs every morning, like smoke—rise in columns."

"The lines then proceed to state that the author's own partial account of his play will be suppressed in the next day's newspaper, and that an abuse of it will be substituted under the appearance of great candour; and conclude with—

"If, therefore, in any one paper you see
An abuse of the play, whatsoever it be,
Wherever the poet shall find a hard rub,
That paper, depend on't, is done by John Grub!"

"As one slight instance of the influence which newspapers have over the minds of the very many people who 'don't take the trouble to think for themselves,' the following incident may be adduced. A few days after the first representation of 'Ways and Means,' the performance of which still continued, in spite of the Johnny Grubs, I strolled into Covent

Garden Market, where there was then another election; and there I met my old friend and brother dramatist, Reynolds: while we were walking arm in arm near the hustings, Reynolds was accosted by an acquaintance who was as unknown to me as I to him; he seemed of the dandy breed, and merely *en passant*, said, 'Reynolds, how do? great crowd here; your friend Colman has written a shocking bad play. How goes the poll? never saw the play, but it's monstrous bad; fine weather, very dull play; going out of town soon?'

"As a contrary instance, however, to show how 'time and the hour run through the roughest day,' and how a play can outlive the attacks of ephemeral censors, Ways and Means is, at this time occasionally acted in the London houses; is a stock piece, sometimes compressed into two acts, sometimes performed in its original three at most of the provincial theatres.

"A Review* of it in its printed form, says, 'This is a play of considerable merit, abounding in wit and well-drawn characters. The plot is simple, but clear, lively, and probable. The character of Sir David Dunder is well imagined, and naturally supported throughout. The dialogue is neat, and well suited to the respective dramatis personæ. The author tells us [in a preface] that in this piece laugh and whim were his objects; and the mirth and good humour of his audience, whatever malice and misrepresentation may affirm to the contrary, have convinced him that his design is accomplished.'

* Biographia Dramatica, edit. 1812, Vol. III., p. 393.

" I beg pardon for quoting the above *éloge* upon myself, but it is a link in my chain which I may be excused for not having omitted. Whether the trifle here in question had been lauded to the skies or hissed off the stage, can be now of no more importance to me than to my readers; and I care at this moment, as little about my Ways and Means, of 1788, as for the state of national finance in the reign of William the Conqueror; I should not, therefore, have mentioned the foregoing petty vexations had they not for the first time caused me to reflect a little, and very little did I then reflect, on the folly of having relinquished the study of an honourable profession, in which I had a fair chance of rising through industry and the connexions I possessed, that I might 'watch the wild vicissitudes of taste,' and make myself dependent upon an arbitrary and capricious body, composed of pit, box, and galleries, that *monstrum horrendum* whom I must thenceforward 'live to please,' that I might 'please to live.' "

The melancholy disorder of the elder Colman began in 1786, by an hemiplegia. In 1789, he was struck with paralysis (as the reader has been apprized in a preceding page) which nearly deprived him of the use of one side of his body, and in a short time afterwards he exhibited unquestionable proofs of mental derangement, thus furnishing a rather deplorable instance that the best intellects and finest talents have but a precarious tenure in our frail and feverish being. It was found necessary to place

Mr. Colman under proper care at Paddington, and the conduct of the theatre devolved upon his son.

On this melancholy occasion the concluding lines of his friend, Churchill's Epistle to Hogarth, naturally intrude themselves on our attention:

> " Sure 'tis a curse which angry fates impose,
> To mortify man's arrogance, that those
> Who 're fashioned of some better sort of clay,
> Much sooner than the common herd decay.
> With curious art the brain too finely wrought,
> Preys on herself, and is destroy'd by thought.
> Constant attention wears the active mind,
> Blots out her pow'rs, and leaves a blank behind."

The finances of the elder Colman moreover were not exempt from as devastating a revolution as that experienced in his person. The greatest affluence from considerable sources of wealth long poured into his coffers, without having ultimately enriched them; and without any waste imputable to known extravagance, it is probable that but for the unremitting exertions of his son, he would have experienced the ill-effects of as severe a reverse in his pecuniary matters as in his faculties. How the son succeeded as an author, the public judgment has sufficiently decided, and how that success enabled him to protect and support his afflicted father, ' in his utmost need,' is no mean eulogium on his principles as well as his talents, and will long be remembered to his advantage by all who hold filial goodness in estimation.

On George Colman, the younger, starting as manager, he records:

" People would be astonished if they were aware

of the cart-loads of trash which are annually offered to the director of a London theatre. The very first manuscript which was proposed to me for representation on my undertaking theatrical management, was from a nautical gentleman, on a nautical subject: the piece was of a tragic description, and in five acts; during the principal scenes of which the hero of the drama declaimed from the main-mast of a man-of-war, without once descending from his position.

"Miles Peter Andrews was one of the most persevering poetical pests.

"Andrews was in truth so wretched a writer, that his new plays in London, like his powder-mills at Dartford, were particularly hazardous affairs, and in great danger of going off with a sudden and violent explosion. One of the most successful efforts to which we find his name attached, is the comic opera called 'Summer Amusement,' brought out at the Haymarket theatre in 1792; but this piece he wrote conjointly with William Augustus Miles,* as inferior a dramatist as Andrews himself. Hence it would appear that a couple of weak authors, by clubbing their imbecilities may strengthen a play rather than render it doubly weak; in like manner two negatives, as we are told by grammarians, will make an affirmative.

"William Augustus Miles dabbled in politics more than in the drama. Having filled a subordinate situation in the Ordnance Office, from which he was dismissed, he published virulent pamphlets

* He wrote, be it acknowledged, several Prologues and Epilogues, very effective *ad captandum vulgus*.

against government, and particularly against that department which had ejected him. Many of these bilious effusions he subscribed so as to make his own name look like an assumed signature: sometimes it was printed backwards, Selim; sometimes forwards, but then it was tacked to such peculiar military subjects as caused it to be mistaken for the Roman dissyllable Mi-les, which few, if any, of my male readers need be told is Latin for a soldier.

"One day when my father and I were walking from Soho Square to the Haymarket, the two above-mentioned witlings were coming the contrary way, and on the opposite side of the street; they had each sent a new dramatic manuscript for acceptance to the summer theatre; and being anxious to get the start of each other in the production of their separate works, they both called out to my father, 'Remember Colman, I am first oars.' 'Humph,' muttered the manager, as they passed on, 'they may talk about first oars, but they have not a skull between them.'"

Miss George the celebrated singer, this season was desirous of returning to the Haymarket theatre. To an application from her for that purpose Colman returned the following reply:—

"Feb. 7, 1793, St. Alban's Street.

"I entreat you to believe, my dear Madam, that (were I permitted by circumstances) it would give me infinite satisfaction to accept the assistance you have so handsomely offered me. Added to the pleasure I should receive in seeing you again at the Haymarket, I should be happy in an opportunity of doing away any doubt upon your mind

of my being illiberal enough to be, in the smallest degree, influenced by any past misunderstandings.

"Your letter has, among other occurrences, brought them back to my recollection: but I recollect them without pique or animosity, and feel myself most cordially disposed to serve you. On considering my arrangements, however, (which for some time have been fully completed for next summer) I find the theatre almost overloaded with expense; and I could not, without injuring its interests, add to its present disbursements. If your inclination for the Haymarket should induce you to look forward to the summer after next, I shall think myself obliged to you if you give me timely notice: as you will then enable me to prove to you that I have not sent you empty professions. I am, my dear Madam, with the warmest wishes for your prosperity,

"Your sincere friend and servant,

To Miss George. G. COLMAN."

Messrs. Sheridan, Linley, and Ford, not having been able to complete their splendid edifice, of which Holland was the architect, in time for the usual commencement of the season, made arrangements with Colman the younger, to bring the Drury Lane Company to the Haymarket Theatre. This period was productive of a dreadful calamity. On the 3rd of February, 1794, their Majesties commanded the performances, and the crowd was so great at the pit entrance, that when the door was opened, a gentleman was thrown down the stairs, and the persons behind him being pushed forward, fell over him, and these again were trampled on by those impelled by the force of numbers who were still rushing on. The groans of the dying and the maimed were terrific, while those who were literally treading their

fellow-creatures to death, had not the power to recede. Fifteen persons were killed, and nineteen others were severely injured! This melancholy accident was not made known to the King, until his return to the palace. A royal command at the Haymarket Theatre did not again occur until 1803.

On the 14th of August, 1794, Mr. Colman the elder, died at Paddington, at the age of 62. His abilities as a dramatist were not more the subjects of praise, than his punctuality as a manager, and his liberal encouragement to other writers for the stage. From the lamentable condition into which he had sunk, both mentally and bodily, his death must have been considered a happy release. A few hours before he expired, he was seized with violent spasms, and these were succeeded by a melancholy stupor, in which he drew his last breath. Of his dramatic productions, which were numerous, we subjoin a list:

Polly Honeycomb, 1760; The Jealous Wife, 1761; The Musical Lady, 1762; Philaster (alteration), 1763; Deuce is in Him, 1763; Midsummer Night's Dream (altered), 1763; Fairy Tale, 1764; Clandestine Marriage, 1766; English Merchant, 1767; King Lear (alteration), 1768; Oxonian in Town, 1769; Man and Wife, 1769; The Portrait, 1770; The Fairy Prince, 1772; Comus, (altered), 1772; Achilles in Petticoats, (altered), 1774; Man of Business, 1774; Epicœne; or, the Silent Woman (altered), 1776; Spleen; or, Islington Spa, 1776; Occasional Prelude, 1776; New Brooms, 1776; Spanish Barber, 1777; Polly (alteration), 1777; The Sheep Shearing, 1777; The Female Chevalier, 1778; Bonduca (alteration), 1778; The Suicide, 1778; Separate Maintenance, 1779; Manager in Distress, 1780; The Genius of Nonsense, 1780; Harlequin Teague, 1782; Fatal Curiosity (alteration), 1783; The Election of Managers, 1784; Tit for Tat, 1788; Ut Pictura Poesis, 1789.

These dramas have considerable merit. In his

petite pieces the plots are simple, yet they contain strong character, and aim at ridiculing fashionable and prevailing follies. His comedies have the same merit with the others, as to the preservation of character. The estimation in which the entertainments exhibited under his direction were held by the public, the reputation which the Haymarket Theatre acquired, and the continual concourse of the fashionable world during the height of summer, sufficiently spoke the praises of Mr. Colman's management.

To sagacity in discovering the talent of his performers, he joined the inclination and ability to display them with every advantage. To him, Mr. Henderson, Miss Farren, Mr. Bannister, Miss George, Mrs. Wells, and Mr. Edwin, owed their introduction to a London audience.*

"Having purchased the Haymarket Theatre on the demise of my father," says George Colman the younger, "I continued to manage it as my own. During such progression, up to the year 1796,

* Among the many literary characters with whom Colman associated, was Dr. Farmer, who died at the lodge of Emanuel College, Cambridge, September 8, 1797. His will, dated about 1792, written on a blank leaf, torn out of an old book, simply stated—'I give to my brother, Joseph Farmer, all my property, not doubting of his using it for the benefit of our family;' but Steevens, with his wonted readiness for mischief, which he designated fun, published in The Oracle of September 21, under the signature of 'One of the Cock and Hen Club,' a ludicrous distribution of his supposed aquatic and other fowl at Cambridge. His screech-owl to Mrs. Mattocks; his old grey parrot, to Mrs. Cowley; his goldfinches, to Sir William Pulteney; his magpie, to George Colman, &c. The joke was posthumous, but it implied Steevens's sense of Colman's character.

inclusive, I scribbled many dramas for the Haymarket, and one for Drury Lane; in almost all of which the younger Bannister, being engaged at both theatres, performed a prominent character; so that for most of the thirteen years I have enumerated, he was of the greatest importance to my theatrical prosperity in my double capacity of author and manager; while I was of some service to him, by supplying him with new characters. These reciprocal interests made us, of course, such close colleagues, that our almost daily consultations promoted amity, while they forwarded business

"From this last-mentioned period, 1796, we were led by our speculations, one after the other, into different tracks. He had arrived at that height of London popularity when his visits to various provincial theatres, in the summer, were productive of much more money than my scale of expense in the Haymarket could afford to give him. As he wintered it, however, in Drury Lane, I profited, for two years more, by his acting in the pieces which I produced there. I then began to write for the rival house in Covent Garden, and this parted us as author and actor.* But separating as we did, through accident, and with the kindest sentiments for each other, it was not likely that we should forget, or neglect, further to cultivate our mutual regard. That regard is now so mellowed by time, that it will never cease till time himself, who in ripening our

* He came back to me, at the Haymarket, for one summer season, in 1804.

friendship, has been all the while whetting his scythe for the friends, shall have mowed down the men, and gathered in his harvest."

Old Tate Wilkinson, the York manager, visiting London at this period, thus describes the new Drury Lane Theatre: "The conveniences, staircases, and true elegance of that house cannot be questioned; but with all the elegancies before the curtain, I could not perceive the stage department, as to green-rooms, dressing-rooms, &c. were nearly so convenient, or even so comfortable as those of the old Drury Lane; and though in honour of the stage, and my true wishes for the prosperity of my chosen brethren of the sock and buskin, I could not refrain a prophesying sigh, that all this elegant mending might be too heavy for the backs of the present ingenious and spirited proprietors; but if not, I cannot think but less theatres might have answered the purpose much better for the community of the gentlemen and ladies of the stage. Take the company of each theatre in a general view, and I fear that many of them, by the very unavoidable charges of a benefit night, must ever run the hazard of being a loser."

This was the opinion of one old stager, who had formerly been a London actor, and we insert it as a prelude to the ideas of the Colmans on the size of theatres.

"My father wrote the preface to his translation of Terence's comedies long before he thought of being Proprietor of the Haymarket Theatre; he could not therefore at that time have given an *ex parte*

opinion, when he says in that preface, speaking of the 'moderns,' that, 'by contracting the dimensions of their theatres, although they have a good deal abated the magnificence of Spectacle, they have been able to approach much nearer to the truth and simplicity of representation.'

"It is curious to observe how, after a certain time, the moderns of Drury Lane and Covent Garden reverted all at once to this magnificence of the ancients of Greece and Rome; for immediately after my father's demise, I opened the Haymarket Theatre in 1795, with an occasional piece,* which contains a ridicule, a good-natured one I hope, on the extended dimensions of the two principal London Play-houses, wherein I say, in a song alluding to them:

> "When people appear
> Quite unable to hear,
> 'Tis undoubtedly needless to talk;"

and that,

> "'Twere better they began
> On the new invented plan,
> And with Telegraphs transmitted us the plot:"

"The new Large Houses soon found the necessity of recurring to that 'magnificence of spectacle' of which my father speaks; they introduced White Oxen, Horses, Elephants, both sham and real; and the song above quoted ends with the following verse:

* 'New Hay at the Old Market;' the first scene of which is still acted under the title of 'Sylvester Daggerwood.'

" But our House here 's so small
That we 've no need to bawl,
And the summer will rapidly pass,
So we hope you 'll think fit
To hear the Actors a bit,
Till the Elephants and Bulls come from grass:
Then let Shakspeare and Jonson go hang, go hang!
Let your Otways and Drydens go drown!
Give them but Elephants and White bulls enough,
And they 'll take in all the town,
Brave boys!"

" No doubt, the vastness of the two Theatres above mentioned must disappoint many who go thither for all that complete gratification arising from the intellectual repast which the whole round of our drama professes to give.

" There are no certain rules of architecture for the conveyance of sound; but an actor, by pitching his voice according to its various powers of modulation, may do much to counteract the impediments in a building; the drawback, therefore, upon his inflections of tone appears to be a good deal less than the deductions from his countenance. To produce in very large theatres the desired and instantaneous effects of the voice, more is requisite, though much may be gained by practice than there ought to be; but to send post-haste intelligence in a smile, to forward despatches by a glance, to print, as it were, a Gazette in the face, that it may reach eager politicians, so far distant from the spot whence information must be transmitted, is a much more arduous undertaking. Still, even this difficulty may, it is presumed, be in some measure surmounted; for, since the adoption of the present scale of the prin-

cipal theatres, there have been and are performers, both tragic and comic, whose sudden turns of countenance have commanded general applause; but whether such effects may not often be produced by daubing, by exaggeration, and distortions of the visage, like scenes painted in distemper, is a question.

" Garrick, always tremblingly alive to his great celebrity, and judicious in nursing his fame, would not probably have risked his powers in theatres of the present magnitude, particularly in the sublimer walk of tragedy. His talents must have suffered a paralysis, a loss of half their vitality, when the rapid and astonishing transitions of his eye and his features could not instantly, by their close fidelity to nature, electrify all who witnessed them.

" On the whole, if a sweeping decision can be formed from these loose remarks, it may be said, that the principal London theatres are too large for all the purposes they should accomplish; too large for the perfect convenience of vision, and for an easy modulation of speech; too large to

' Hold the mirror up to nature,'

so as to give a full and just reflection of her delicate features and proportions; and theatrical proprietors seem to be of this opinion, by giving of late more into spectacle, melo-drama, and opera, which may be better seen and heard at a distance, than those representations which have been quaintly termed the Legitimate Drama. The proprietors may possibly plead, that there is a dearth of legitimate dramatists,

and it may be so; it has been averred to be the case in all ages; but few regular shoemakers are inclined to take the trouble of making shoes, when they find so much encouragement given to them for cobbling. Between managers and the town, who leads or who drives is a problem of difficult solution; do they not by turns lead and drive each other?"

CHAPTER VIII.

1796.

Blue Beard—Feudal Times—The Forty Thieves—O'Keefe's first introduction to Colman, 1777—His pleasant comic dramas—Colman in Dublin, 1779—The Iron Chest produced—The celebrated Preface by Colman the younger—Rehearsals of the play—John Kemble—Dodd—Sir Edward Mortimer—Opium—Apology—Walking over the course—Severe animadversions—Caleb Williams—Godwin—Determination not to confound the two Georges—Kiddy Davies—Caufield's imitation—Lengthy letter of old Macklin to the elder Colman (a curiosity).

Colman, the reader will have noticed in the preceding chapter, apologises for cobbling. In the large new theatre of Drury Lane, in the fulness of his dramatic vigour, he produced three spectacles, all good in their way; *viz.* 'Blue Beard,' 'Feudal Times,' and 'The Forty Thieves.' The second piece, we will not say drama, was the least effective; and the poetry, in the burthen of one of the chorusses of a song sung by Bannister, was rather in the Edwin-O'Keefe manner.

> "Bless our noble Master,
> Keep him from disaster;
> Twang dillo, dillo, dillo dee!"

Dear, kind-hearted, merry O'Keefe, to abstain from mentioning his name, as having been so fre-

quently employed by both the Colmans, and of such eminent service to the little Haymarket theatre, would be indeed an unjust omission; but alas! for the fate of a comic author, what do the public care for the man who has sent tens of thousands home to their beds laughing, year after year—who has toiled incessantly for their gratification; his contemporaries, the nightly admirers of his effusions, have followed the creator of mirth and whim to his last home, and a succeeding generation of playgoers barely know his name!

O'Keefe's first acquaintance with the elder Colman, according to the 'Recollections' of the former, is thus narrated:—"Coming with my family to London, the Christmas of 1777, and fearing the mortifications that an author must of course feel on his compositions being rejected by managers, I sent my play to George Colman, Esq., senior, patentee of the Theatre Royal Haymarket, with a letter, requesting that, should he disapprove of it, he would have it left at the bar of the Grecian Coffee-house, directed to A. B.; and if he liked it well enough to promise he would bring it out, that he would send an answer as above; and the author, on his mentioning a time, would wait upon him. The next day I called at the Coffee-house, where I found a jocular, yet polite, and indeed friendly letter from Mr. Colman, directed to A. B., with his approbation of the piece; a promise to bring it out the following summer, and his wish to see the author at Soho Square the next day at eleven o'clock, a joyful letter to me, as, previous to

my sending my play * to Mr. Colman, I showed it to my early friend William Lewis, who told me it was not worth two-pence.

" The next morning I was punctual to appointment, and posted to Soho Square, where, at the left-hand corner of Bateman's Buildings, I knocked at the door of a fine looking house, and was ushered into the library. Seated in cap and gown at breakfast, I there, for the first time, saw the manager of the Haymarket Theatre, author of The English Merchant, The Jealous Wife, &c. who received me with all the frank good nature of his character, laughed heartily at the whim of the piece, and repeated the promise of bringing it out on his boards. I then ventured to disclose my name."

The piece was produced, and was successful. O'Keefe's next drama written for Colman was 'The Son-in-Law,' which appeared in 1779; the music was composed by Dr. Arnold.

In the winter of that year, Colman the elder went over to Dublin, invited by Mr. Jefferies, brother-in-law to Lord Fitzgibbon, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and other leading persons of rank, to establish a theatre in that city; but from Colman's own survey of the little likelihood of success in such a speculation he became alarmed, and gave up his part in the affair. O'Keefe then wrote 'The Dead Alive,' which Colman produced in 1781; 'The Agreeable Surprise' in the same season, also came from his fertile and merry pen. Edwin at this period was the low

* Be it remembered, this play, as O'Keefe terms it, was the broad farce, called 'Tony Lumpkin in Town.'

comedian, and enjoyed the greatest popularity with the public. Colman, seeing the advantages he derived from so eccentric and ready a writer as O'Keefe, gave him constant invitations to Soho Square, and to Richmond. When Colman published his translation of Terence, the motto he prefixed was the first line of Pedrillo's song, in The Castle of Andalusia,

"A master I have, and I am his man."

A few days after the failure of O'Keefe's opera 'The Banditti,'* at Covent Garden Theatre, the author was at Colman's house, with Doctor Arnold and others, when the Doctor remarked, that the Opera had been cut too much. Colman said, "Ah! but who was the cutter?" and looking at O'Keefe with a chuckle, added, "Not the Cutter of Coleman Street."†

In 1783, O'Keefe wrote 'The Young Quaker,' which Colman produced with considerable success. 'Peeping Tom,' was his next farce. Edwin as the Tailor was admirable, yet Colman declared to O'Keefe, that he had wrought the humour so high, that even Edwin, with all his tiptoe stretch, was unable to reach it. 'The Beggar on Horseback' was written by O'Keefe for the Haymarket the next season. The following letter from Colman at Bath to O'Keefe shows the intimacy which subsisted between them.

"My Dear O'Keefe, Bath, March 21, 1786.

"I am sorry that the continuation of your son's illness stops your journey, and wish he could have come with you

* Afterwards produced as 'The Castle of Andalusia!'

† The title of one of Cowley's plays.

as a new Bath Guide. Go on with your piece at least, and be assured, that there is no idea of any change in the present administration. Report is a lying gossip, for I am told she has lately given me a second stroke, though I have been, ever since my arrival to the present moment, in a state of gradual but effective recovery. I have this day began to bathe; and if the bath answers as well as the pump has answered, I shall ascend the throne without stumbling or tottering, and wield the sceptre with a hand as firm and steady as at any period of my turbulent reign. Poor Harris, I hear from good authority, has been very ill indeed, but has for some time been pronounced out of danger. I am not sorry you will summer it at Barnes, as you will, I hope, often visit your neighbour at Richmond, who will run there as often as possible, and from whom you will always find a hearty welcome. With good wishes to you and your brother, I remain, Dear O'Keefe,

Your's most truly,

G. Colman."

The following opinion of the Colmans, by O'Keefe, ought, perhaps, to find a place here.

"And here I am happy to acknowledge and amply declare, that through the whole progress of the younger Colman's dramatic transactions with me, he proved himself, as his father whimsically called him, in his prologue to young George's first piece, 'Two to One,' 'a true chip of the old block;' for friendship is often hereditary, and this George the second of the theatrical sceptre has always been to me most kind and liberal."

O'Keefe's pieces were the staple commodity at the Haymarket. He fitted Edwin and Parsons accurately with whimsical characters. His dramas originally produced in the little theatre, were 'Tony Lumpkin

in Town,' 'The Son in Law,' 'The Agreeable Surprise,' 'The Young Quaker,' 'The Dead Alive,' 'Peeping Tom,' 'The Birth Day; or, the Prince of Arragon,' 'The Beggar on Horseback,' 'The Prisoner at Large,' 'The Basket Maker,' and 'The Magic Banner.' The rest were brought out by Mr. Harris, at Covent Garden, with one exception, which was a comedy, written late in life, and condemned at Drury Lane Theatre, in which there was a principal character written for Mrs. Jordan.

This year, 1796, was remarkable in the life of Colman, for the production and failure of his play entitled 'The Iron Chest,' at Drury Lane Theatre. Its non-success was attributed by the author to Mr. Kemble, the original representative of Sir Edward Mortimer. Colman was so sore on this subject at the period, that he commemorated his bitterness in a preface prefixed to the play, written with a pen which assimilated in its texture to the iron instrument presented by the devil to Father Ambrosio, in Monk Lewis's romance. This caustic record has been partially suppressed; both author and actor having relinquished a mutual animosity, which in its character and conduct could reflect but little credit on either. It has nevertheless been deemed right not to omit the offensive preface in the present work; but it must be remembered that it was written under the impulse of feelings rendered poignantly acute by the loss of the unprecedented sum which had been agreed to be paid to Colman, had the play proved successful, and therefore must be received with caution. That Mr. Kemble's behaviour throughout the business, was not such as to exculpate him

entirely from the charges urged against him, must be admitted, but that he was so grossly culpable as Mr. Colman endeavours to prove, may be unequivocally denied.

COLMAN'S PREFACE TO THE IRON CHEST.

"Having been for some time a labourer in the drama, and finding it necessary to continue my labours, I cannot help endeavouring to guard the past from misrepresentation, lest my supineness may injure the future. Conscious that a prejudice has been created against the play, which I now submit to the reader, and conscious how far I am innocent of raising it, it were stupid to sit down in silence, and thus tacitly acknowledge myself guilty of dulness, humbly confess I have been deficient in the knowledge of my trade, damn myself for a bungling workman, and fix a disrepute upon every article which may hereafter come from my hands.

"Thanks to you, ladies and gentlemen! you have been kind customers to me; and I am proud to say that you have stamped a fashion on my goods. Base, indeed, and ungrateful were the attempt, after your favours, so long received and continued, to impose upon you a clumsy commodity, and boast it to be ware of the best quality that I ever put up to sale! No, on the word of an honest man, I have bestowed no small pains on this 'Iron Chest,' which I offer you. Inspect it: examine it. You see the maker's name is upon it. I do not say it is perfect. I do not pretend to tell you that it is of the highest polish; there is no occasion for that; many of my brethren have presented you with *mere*

linings for chests, and you have been content ; but I trust that you will find my 'Iron Chest' will hold together, that it is tolerably sound, and fit for all the purposes for which it was intended ; then how came it to fall in pieces after four days wear? I will explain that; but alas! alas! my heart doth yearn when I think on the task which circumstance has thrust upon me.

" Now, by the spirit of Peace I swear! were I not still doomed to explore the rugged windings of the drama, I would wrap myself in mute philosophy, and repose calmly under the dark shade of my grievance, rather than endure the pain of this explanation. I cannot, however, cry, 'let the world slide;' I must pursue my journey, and be active to clear away the obstacles that impede my progress.

" I am too callous now to be annoyed by those innumerable gnats and insects who daily dart their impotent stings on the literary traveller, and too knowing to dismount and waste my time in whipping grasshoppers; but here is a scowling, sullen, black bull, right athwart my road; a monster of magnitude of the Bœotian breed, perplexing me in my wanderings through the entangled labyrinth of Drury.

" He stands sulkily before me, with sides seemingly impenetrable to any lash, and tougher than the dun cow of Warwick! His front outfronting the brazen bull of Perillus! He has bellowed, gentlemen, yea, he hath bellowed a dismal sound! a hollow unvaried tone, heaved from his very midriff, and striking the listener with torpor! Would I could pass the animal quietly for my own sake, and for

his, by Jupiter! I repeat it, I would not willingly harm the bull. I delight not in baiting him. I would jog as gently by him as by the ass that grazes on the common; but he has obstinately blocked up my way; he has already tossed and gored me severely. I must make an effort, or he batters me down, and leaves me to bite the dust.

"The weapon I must use is not of that brilliant and keen quality, which, in a skilful hand, neatly cuts up the subject, to the delight and admiration of the bystanders; it is a homely cudgel of narrative; a blunt batoon of matter of fact; affording little display of art in the wielder, and so heavy in its nature, that it can merely claim the merit of being appropriate to the opponent at whom it is levelled. Pray stand clear! for I shall handle this club vilely, and if any one come in my way, he may chance to get a rap which I did not intend to bestow on him. Good, venal, and venemous gentlemen, who dabble in ink for pay or from pique, and who have dubbed yourselves critics, keep your distance now! Run home to your garrets! Tools! ye are but *ephemera* at best, and will die soon enough in the paltry course of your insignificant natures, without thrusting your ears (if there be any left you) into the heat of this perilous action. Avaunt!

"Well, well, stay if ye are bent upon it, and be pert and busy. Your folly to me is of no moment,* I hasten to my narrative. I agreed to write the

* Ye who impartially and conscientiously sit in diurnal judgment upon modern dramatists, apply not this to yourselves. It aims only at the malevolent, the mean, and the ignorant, who are the disgrace of your order.

following play at the instance of the chief proprietor of Drury Lane Theatre, who unconditionally agreed to pay me a certain sum for my labour ; and this certain sum being much larger than any, I believe, offered on similar occasions, created no small jealousy among the Parnassian *sans culottes*, several of whom have of late been rapidly industrious to level, to the muddy surface of their Castilian ditch, so *aristocratico dramatic* a bargainer.

" The play, as fast as written (piece meal) was put into rehearsal: but let it here be noted, gentle reader, that a rehearsal in Drury Lane (I mean as far as relates to this Iron Chest) is *lucus a* NON *lucendo.* They y'clept it a rehearsal, I conjecture: *but they did* NOT *rehearse.* I call the loved shade of Garrick to witness; nay, I call the less loved presence of the *then* acting manager to avow, that there never was one fair rehearsal of the play—never one rehearsal, wherein one, two, or more of the performers, very essential to the piece, were not absent; and all the rehearsals which I attended, so slovenly and irregular, that the ragged master of a theatrical barn might have blushed for the want of discipline in the pompous director of His Majesty's servants, and at the vast and astonishing new-erected Theatre Royal Drury Lane. It is well known, to those conversant with the business of the stage, that no perfect judgment can be formed of the length of a play, apparent to the spectator, nor of the general effect intended to be produced, until the private repetitions among the actors, have reduced the business into something like *lucidus ordo:* then comes the time for the judicious author to take up

his pruning-knife, or handle his hatchet. Then he goes lustily to work, my masters, upon his curtailments or additions; his transpositions, his loppings, his parings, trimmings, and dockings, &c. &c.

"As in the writing so in the rehearsal—

> "Ordinis hæc virtus erit et venus, aut ego fallor;
> Ut jam nunc dicat, jam nunc debentia dici
> Pleraque differat, et præsans in tempus omittat:
> Hoc amet, hoc spernat, promissi carminis auctor."

"But, woe is me! while I was patiently waiting the expected crisis, a circumstance occurred which compelled me to watch a crisis of a less agreeable nature. A fever attacked me, as I sat beneath the damp dome of Drury, and drove me *malgré moi*, to bed; where I lay during a week, till three hours before the play was exhibited. In addition to the unavoidable injury arising from the author's absence, Mr. Kemble, the acting-manager, and principal performer in the piece, was, and had been for a few days previous to my own illness, confined to his chamber by indisposition. I lay little stress, indeed, upon his temporary incapacity to perform his managerial duty; his mode of discharging it, hitherto, was productive of little benefit to me; still it was some drawback—for were a mere log thrown amidst a Thespian community, and nominated its dull and ponderous ruler, still the block, while in its place, would carry some sway with it. But his non-attendance as an actor so much engaged in the play, was particularly detrimental.

"Nay, even the composer of the music—and here let me breathe a sigh to the memory of departed

worth and genius, as I write the name of Storace—even he could not preside in his department. He was preparing an early flight to that abode of harmony, where choirs of angels swell the note of welcome to an honest and congenial spirit.

"Here, then, was a direct stop to the business? No such thing, the troops proceeded without leaders; in the dark, Messieurs! '*sans* eyes, *sans* everything.' The prompter, it is true, a kind of non-commissioned officer, headed the corps, and a curious march was made of it.

"But, lo! two days, or three, I forget which, previous to the public representation, up rose King Kemble, like Somnus from his ebon bed, to distribute his dosing directions among his subjects:

> "Tarda gravitate jacentes
> Vix oculus tollens;
> Summaque pertuticus mutanti pectora mento,
> Excussit, tandem, sibi se; cubitoque levatus," &c.

"He came, saw, and pronounced the piece to be ripe for exhibition. It was ordered to be performed immediately. News was brought to me, in my sickness, of the mighty fiat; and although I was told, officially, that due care had been taken to render it worthy of public attention, I submitted with doubt and trembling to the decree. My doubts, too, of this boasted care were not a little increased by a note, which I received from the prompter, written by the manager's orders, *three hours only* before the first representation of the play: wherein, at this late period, my consent was abruptly requested to a transposition of two of the most material scenes in

the second act; and the reason given for this curious proposal was, that the present stage of Drury—where the architect and machinist, with the judgment and ingenuity of a politician and a wit to assist them, had combined to outdo all former theatrical outdoings—was so bunglingly constructed, that there was not time for the carpenters to place the lumbering frame-work, on which an abbey was painted, behind the representation of a library, without leaving a chasm of ten minutes in the action of the play, and that in the middle of an act. Such was the fabrication of a stage whose extent and powers have been so vauntingly advertised, under the classic management of Mr. Kemble, in the edifying exhibition of pantomimes, processions, pageants, triumphal cars, milk-white horses, and elephants.

"As I did not choose to alter the construction of my play, without deliberation, merely to screen the ill-construction of the house, I would not listen to this modest and well-timed demand of turning the progress of my fable topsy-turvey.

"Very ill, and very weak from the effects of the fever, which had not yet left me, I made an effort, and went to the theatre to witness the performance. I found Mr. Kemble in his dressing-room, a short time before the curtain was drawn up, taking *opium pills;* and nobody who is acquainted with that gentleman will doubt me when I assert, that they are medicine which he has long been in the habit of swallowing.

"He appeared to me very unwell, and seemed, indeed, to have imbibed

> ' Poppy and mandragora,
> And all the drowsy syrups of the world.'

The play began, and all went smoothly, till a trifling disapprobation was shown to the character personated by Mr. Dodd, the scene in which he was engaged, being much too long—a proof of the neglect of those whose business it was to have informed me (in my unavoidable absence from the theatre) that it appeared in the last rehearsals to want curtailment.

" I considered this, however, to be of no great moment; for Mr. Kemble was to appear immediately in a subsequent scene, and much was expected from his execution of a part written expressly for his powers.

" And here let me describe the requisites for the character which I have attempted to draw, that the world may judge whether I have taken a wrong measure of the personage I proposed to fit; premising that I have worked for him before with success, and therefore it may be presumed that I am somewhat acquainted with the dimensions of his qualifications.

" I required, then, a man—

> ' Of a tall stature, and of sable hue,
> Much like the Son of Kish, that lofty Jew.'

" A man of whom it might be said :

> ' There 's something in his soul
> O'er which his melancholy sits and broods.'

Look at the actor—and will any body do him the injustice to declare that he is deficient in these qua-

lifications. It would puzzle any author, in any time or country, from Æschylus down, even to the translator of Lodoiska, and really, gentlemen, I can go no lower, to find a figure and face better suited to the purpose. I have endeavoured, moreover, to pourtray Sir Edward Mortimer as a man stately in his deportment, reserved in his temper, mysterious, cold, and impenetrable in his manner; and the candid observers, I trust, will allow that Mr. Kemble is thoroughly adequate to such a personation.

"To complete my requisitions, I demanded a performer who could enter into the spirit of a character proceeding upon romantic, half-witted principles, abstracted in his opinions, sophisticated in his reasonings, and who is thrown into situations where his mind and conduct stand tiptoe, on the extremest verge of probability. Here, surely I have not mistaken my man; for, if I am able to form any opinion of him as an actor, and my opinion, I know, is far from singular, his chief excellence almost approaches that style which the learned denominate caricature.

"Possibility on the stretch, passion over-leaping its customary bound, movements of the souls, sullen or violent, very rarely seen in the common course of things, yet still may be seen—in these is his element.

"As our language is said to have sunk under the vast conception of Milton, so does the modesty of nature suffer a depression beneath the unwieldy imaginings of Mr. Kemble. He seldom deigns to accompany the goddess in her ordinary walks, when

she decently paces the regular path with a sober step, and a straight person; but he kindly assists her when she is, doubtless in need of assistance, when she appears out of her way, crazy and crooked.

"The arrogant fault of being more refined than refinement, more proper than propriety, more sensible than sense, which nine times in ten, will disgust the spectators, becomes frequently an advantage to him in characters of the above description.

"In short, Mr. Kemble is a paragon representative of the *lusus naturæ;* and were Mr. Kemble sewed up in a skin, to act a hog in a pantomime, he would act a hog with six legs better than a hog with four.

"If any one ask why I chose to sketch a *lusus naturæ,* when it might better become an author to be chaste in his delineation, I can only reply, that I did so to obtain the assistance of Mr. Kemble in his best manner; and that now, I do most heartily repent me; for never, sure, did man place the main strength of his building on so rotten a prop.

"Well, the great actor was discovered as Sir Edward Mortimer in his library. Gloom and desolation sat upon his brow; and he was habited, from the wig to the shoe-string, with the most studied exactness. Had one of King Charles the First's portraits walked from its frame upon the boards of the theatre, it could not have afforded a truer representation of ancient and melancholy dignity. The picture could not have looked better; but in justice to the picture, it must also be added, that the picture could scarcely have acted worse.

"The spectators, who gaped with expectation at his first appearance, yawned with lassitude before his first exit. It seemed, however, that illness had totally incapacitated him from performing the business he had undertaken. For his mere illness he was entitled to pity, for his conduct under it, he undoubtedly deserved censure.

"How can Mr. Kemble, as a manager and an actor, justify his thrusting himself forward in a new play, the material interest of which rested on his own powers, at a moment when he must be conscious that he had no powers at all? Mr. Kemble owes a duty to the public, to his employer, and to an author writing for his employer's house. How does he treat the claimants upon his service in this instance? Exactly thus; he insults the understanding of the first, and injures the interest of the two last, by calling in a crowd to an entertainment which he knows he must mar.

"I requested him, at the end of the first act, to order an apology to be made for his indisposition, lest the uninformed or malicious might attribute the ponderosity of the performer to the heaviness of the author. I was anxious to disavow all right and title to those pigs of lead which did not belong to me, and of which Mr. Kemble was the just proprietor. But no: he peremptorily declared he would not suffer an apology to be made: it should have been made (if at all) before the play begun. Then why was it not made? He did not *then* imagine that illness would have disabled him. So, then, a man quits his chamber, after an attack which has evidently

weakened him extremely, and he has no bodily feel, no internal monitor, to whisper to him that he is feeble, and that he has not recovered sufficient strength to make a violent exertion! This mode of reasoning adopted by Mr. Kemble, is much in the spirit of the clown who did not know whether he could play on a fiddle till he tried. Be it noted also, that Mr. Kemble was swallowing his opium pills *before* the play began *because he was ill;* but opium causes strange oblivious effects: and these pills must have occasioned so sudden a lapse in Mr. Kemble's memory, that he forgot when he took them, why he took them, or that he had taken them at all. This dose must have been very powerful. Still, for the reasons already stated, I pressed for an apology; still Mr. Kemble continued obstinate in opposing it. His indisposition, he said, was evident; he had coughed very much upon the stage, and an apology would make him 'look like a fool.'

"Good nature, in excess, becomes weakness: but I never yet found, in the course of my reading, that good nature and folly would bear the same definition; Mr. Kemble, it should seem, and he produced managerical authority for it, considered the terms to be synonimous. Freely, however, forgiving him his unkindness, in refusing to gratify a poor devil of an author, who, very anxious for his reputation, was very moderate in his request, I do, in all Christian charity, most sincerely wish that Mr. Kemble may never find greater cause 'to look like a fool,' than an apology for his indisposition.

"At length, by dint of perseverance, I gained my

point. A proprietor of the theatre was called in upon the occasion,* whose mediation in my favour carried more weight with the acting manager than a hapless dramatist's entreaty, and the apology was, in due form, delivered to the audience.

" One-third of the play only was yet performed; and I was now to make up my mind, like an unfortunate traveller, to pursue my painful journey through two stages more, upon a broken down poster, on whose back lay all the baggage for my expedition. Miserably and most heavily in hand did the poster proceed! he groaned, he lagged, he coughed, he winced, he wheezed! Never was seen so sorry a jade! The audience grew completely soured, and once completely soured, everything naturally went wrong. They recurred to their disapprobation of poor Dodd, and observe what this produced: I must relate it.

" Mr. Kemble had just plodded through a scene, regardless of those loud and manifest tokens that the critics delighted not in the ' drowsy hums' with which he ' rang night's yawning peal,' when Dodd appeared to him on the stage, at whose entrance the clamour was renewed. Then, and *not till then*, did the acting manager, who had been deaf as any post to the supplications of the author for an apology, then did he appear suddenly seized with a fit of good nature. He voluntarily came forward ' to look like a fool,' and beg the indulgence of the town. He feared he was the unhappy cause of their disapprobation; he entreated their patience, and hoped

* Mr. Richardson.—Ed.

he should shortly gain strength to enable them to judge, on a future night, what he handsomely termed the merits of the play. Here was friendship! Here was adroitness! While the public were testifying their disgust at the piece, through the medium of poor Dodd,* Mr. Kemble, with unexampled generosity, took the whole blame on his own shoulders, and heroically saved the author, by so timely an interposition. I was charmed with this master-stroke, and at the impulse of the moment I thanked him. But alas! how narrow is the soul of man! how distrustful in its movements, how scanty in its acknowledgments, how perplexing to itself in its combinations! Had I afterwards looked on the thing simply and nakedly by itself, why, the thing is a good-natured thing; but I must be putting other circumstances by the side of it, with a plague to me! I must be puzzling myself to see if all fits, if all is of a piece, and what is the result? Miserable that I am! I have lost the pleasure of evincing a gratitude, which I thought I owed, because I no longer feel myself a debtor. Had I abandoned my mind to that placid negligence, that luxurious confidence which the inconsiderate enjoy, it had never occurred to me that Mr. Kemble, foreseeing, perhaps, that an aggrieved author might not be totally silent, stepped forward with this speech to the public, as a kind of *salvo*, should a statement be made, for his rigidity in the first instance. It had never occurred to me that Mr. Kemble was sufficiently hissed, yawned at, laughed at, and coughed down, to

* Dodd was the original representative of Adam Winterton.

have made his apology *before* Mr. Dodd appeared; it had never occurred to me, that his making his apology at a previous moment would have answered the same purpose to *me*, and not to *him*. It never occurred, in short, that there is such a thing as ostentatious humility, and a politic act of kindness; and that I should have waited the sequel of a man's conduct, before I thanked him for one instance of seeming good-will, close upon the heels of stubborn ill-nature, and in the midst of existing and palpable injury. The sequel will show that I was premature in my acknowledgment; but before I come to the sequel a word or two (I will be brief) to close my account of this, the first night's eventful history. The piece was concluded, and *given out* for a second performance with much opposition.

"Friends, who never heard the play read, shook their heads; friends who *had* heard it read, scarcely knew it again; several, I doubt not, of the impartial, who chose to be active, actively condemned; and enemies of course rejoiced in an opportunity of joining them. No opportunity could be fairer. The play was at least a full hour too long; and had Job himself sat to hear it, he must have lost his patience. But, if, gentle reader, thou possessed Job's quality, and hast followed me thus far in my narrative, it will appear to thee, for I doubt not thy retention and combination, that I was unable to curtail it effectually, at the proper time, the last rehearsal. I was then laid flat, my dear friends, as you remember I told you, by a fever. The acting manager *did* attend the last rehearsal, and suffered the piece to

be produced *uncut*, 'to drag its slow length along,' surcharged with all his own incapacity, and all his opium.

"How then do I stand indebted, according to the articles of this night's statement? I owe to Mr. Kemble

"For his illness	Compassion.
"For his conduct under it	Censure.
"For his refusing to make an apology .	A smile!
"For his making an apology	A sneer.
"For his mismanagement	A groan.
"For his acting	A hiss.

"This account is somewhat like the tavern-bill picked from Falstaff's pocket, when he is snoring behind the arras. There is but one halfpenny-worth of compassion to this intolerable deal of blame.

"Now for the sequel. I have shewn, I think, that Mr. Kemble, in the first instance, undertook a duty which he *could* not perform. I have now to affirm, with all the difficulty of proving a negative full in my face, that he afterwards made a mockery of discharging a duty which he *would* not perform.

"After a week's interval, to give him time to recruit his strength, and the author time to curtail and alter the play, for the impression which the mismanager and actor had contrived to stamp, rendered alteration necessary, it was a second time represented.

"I must here let the uninformed reader into a secret; but I must go to Newmarket to make him understand me. No, Epsom will do as well, and that is nearer home. It often happens at a race, that a known horse, from whom good sport is ex-

pected, disappoints the crowd by *walking over his course.* He does not miss an inch of the ground ; but affords not one jot of diversion, unless some pleasure is received in contemplating his figure. Now an actor can do the very same thing. He can *walk over his part ;* he can miss no more of his words than the horse does of his way ; he can be as dull and as tedious, and as good-looking as the horse in his progress, the only difference between the two animals is, that the horse brings in him who bets upon him a gainer ; but the luckless wight who has a large stake depending upon the actor, is, decidedly certain to lose. There is a trick too, that the jockies practise, which is called, I think, *playing booty.* This consists in appearing to use their utmost endeavour to reach the winning post first, when they are already determined to come in the last.

" The consequence is, that all, except the knowing ones, attribute no fault to the jockey, but damn the horse for a sluggard. An actor can *play booty* if he chooses : he can pretend to whip and spur, and do his best, when the connoisseur knows, all the while, he is shirking ; but sluggard is the unmerited appellation given by the majority to the innocent author.

" Mr. Kemble chiefly chose to be the horse, and *walked over the ground.* Every now and then (but scarcely enough to save appearances) he gave a slight touch of the jockey, and *played booty.* Whether the language which is put into the mouth of Sir Edward Mortimer be above mediocrity, or below contempt, is not the present purpose ; but

the words he is made to utter certainly convey a meaning; and the circumstances of the scenes afford an opportunity to the performer of playing off his mimic emotions, his transitions of passion, his starts, and all the trickeries of his trade.

"The devil a trick did Mr. Kemble play but a scurvy one! His emotions and passions were so rare, and so feeble, that they seasoned his general insipidity, like a single grain of wretched pepper thrown into the largest dose of water-gruel that ever was administered to an invalid. For the most part he toiled on, line after line, in a dull current of undiversified sound, which stole upon the ear far more drowsily than the distant murmurings of Lethe, with no attempt to break the lulling stream, or check its sleep-inviting course.

"Frogs in a marsh, flies in a bottle, wind in a crevice, a preacher in a field, the drone of a bagpipe, all, all yielded to the inimitable and soporific monotony of Mr. Kemble!

"The very best dramatic writing, where passion is expressed, if delivered languidly by the actor, will fail in its intended effect; and I will be bold enough to say, that were the *curse in King Lear* new to an audience, and they heard it uttered, for the first time, in a croak, fainter than a crow's in a consumption, it would pass unnoticed, or appear vapid to the million.

"If I raise a critical clatter about my ears by this assertion, which some may twist into a profanation of Shakspeare, I leave to Horace, who can fight battles better than I, to defend me.

> ' Si dicentis erunt fortunis absona dicta,
> Romani tollerit pedites equitesque cachinnum.'

" That Mr. Kemble did not misconceive the part is certain, for he told me, some time before the play was acted, that he feared the exertions requisite in Sir Edward Mortimer would strain his lungs more than Octavian in the Mountaineers.

" That he can strain his lungs to good purpose, in Octavian, is well known; and, after this, his own intimation, how will he escape the charge of wilful and direct delinquency, when, with such conception of the part, and with health recovered, he came forward in the true spirit of Bottom, and aggravated his voice so, that he roared you as gently as a sucking dove*. He insulted the town, and injured his employer and the author sufficiently in the first instance; in the second, he added to the insult and injury a hundred fold; and as often as he mangled the character (three or four times, I am uncertain which, after the first night's performance), he heaped aggravation upon aggravation.

" The most miserable mummer that ever disgraced the walls of a theatre, could not have been a stronger draw-back than Mr. Kemble. He was not only dull in himself, but the cause of dulness in others. Like the baleful *upas of Java*, his pestiferous influence infected all around him. When two actors come forward, to keep up the shuttle-cock of scenic fiction, if one plays slovenly, the other cannot maintain his game.

* Mr. Kemble informed me, previous to the second representation of the play, that he felt himself capable of exertion.

"Poor Bannister, jun. would he speak out (but I have never pressed him, and never shall press him to say a word on the subject), could bear ample testimony to the truth of this remark. He suffered like a man under the cruelty of Mezentius. All alive himself, he was tied to a corpse, which he was fated to drag about with him, scene after scene, which weighed him down, and depressed his vigour. Miss Farren, too, who might animate anything but a soul of lead, and a face of iron, experienced the same fate.

"I could proceed, and argue, and reason, and discuss, and tire the reader, as I have tired myself, (it is now, good friend, one o'clock in the morning,) to prove, further, that Mr. Kemble was unsound in my cause, and that he ruined my play; but I will desist here. I think I have prosed enough to manifest that my arguments are not unfounded.

"They who are experienced in dramatics will, I trust, see that I have made a fair 'extenuation' of myself; they who are impartial, will, I hope, be convinced that I have 'set down nought in malice.' The only question that may arise to shake, materially, the credit of all I have said, is 'How is it probable that Mr. Kemble should injure you thus without provocation? Is it in nature?—is it in man?' I can merely answer, that I am unconscious of having given him cause for provocation: that if I have given him cause, he has taken a bad mode of revenge; that Mr. Kemble's nature has frequently puzzled me in my observations upon it, and that I think him *a very extraordinary man.*

"But let him take this with him, should this crudely written preface ever fall in his way, I have committed it to paper *currente calamo*. I mean no allusion, no epithet, to apply to him as a private individual. As a private individual I give him not that notice which it might, here, be impertinent to bestow; but I have an undoubted right to discuss his merits, or demerits, in his public capacities of manager and actor; and my cause of complaint gives me a good reason as well as a right. His want of conduct, his neglect, his injustice, his oppression, his finesse, his person, his face, are in this point of view all open to my animadversion.

> 'He is my goods, my chattels;
> My horse, my ox, my ass, my anything.'

And I would animadvert still further, did I not think I had already said sufficient to gain the object of guarding my own reputation. That object has solely swayed me in dwelling so long upon a 'plain tale,' encumbered with so strutting a hero as John Kemble.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

"I am indebted for the ground-work of this play to a novel entitled 'Things as they are; or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams, written by William Godwin.' Much of Mr. Godwin's story I have omitted; much which I have adopted, I have compressed; much I have added; and much I have taken the liberty to alter. All this I did that I might fit it, in the best of my judgment, to the stage.

"I have cautiously avoided all tendency to that which, vulgarly in many instances, is termed politics, with which many have told me Caleb Williams teems.

"The stage has now no business with politics; and should a dramatic author endeavour to dabble in them, it is the Lord Chamberlain's office to check his attempts, before they meet the eye of the public. I perused Mr. Godwin's book, as a tale replete with interesting incident, ingenious in its arrangement, masterly in its delineation of character, and forcible in its language. I considered it as right of common, and by a title which custom has given to dramatists, I enclosed it within my theatrical paling. However I may have tilled the land, I trust he discovers no intentional injury to him in my proceeding.

"To all the performers, excepting Mr. Kemble, I offer my hearty thanks for their exertions, which would have served me more, had not an actor, 'dark as Erebus,' cast a gloom upon them, which none of their efforts, however brilliant, could entirely disperse. But this does not diminish my obligations to them: so much indeed I owe to them, that when the play was last performed, it was rising, spite of Erebus, in favour with the town. It was advertised, day after day, at the bottom of the play-bills for repetition, till the promissory advertisement became laughable; and, at length, the advertisement and play were dropped altogether.

"If, after the foregoing preface, I should at a future period, bring the play forward in the Haymarket theatre, I am fully aware of the numbers

who, from party and pique, may now oppose it. I am aware, too, of the weight which a first impression leaves upon the minds of the most candid; still, so strong is my confidence in the genuine decision of a London audience who have a fair opportunity of exercising their judgment and feelings, which they have not had yet in respect of this play, that I believe I shall venture an appeal.

"The piece is now printed as it was acted on the first night, that they who peruse it may decide whether, even in that shape, with all the misfortunes before enumerated with which it was doomed to struggle, it should be for ever consigned to moulder on the shelf.

"The songs, duets, and chorusses, are intended merely as vehicles for musical effect. Some critics have pompously called them 'lyric poetry,' that by raising them to dignity they may more effectually degrade them; as men lift a stone very high, before they let it fall, when they would completely dash it to pieces.

"I now leave the gentle reader to the perusal of the play, and, lest my father's memory may be injured by mistakes; and in the confusion of after-times, the translator of Terence, and the author of The Jealous Wife, be supposed guilty of the Iron Chest, I shall, were I to reach the Patriarchal longevity of Methusaleh, continue, in all my dramatic productions, to subscribe myself,

GEORGE COLMAN THE YOUNGER."

"Piccadilly, July 20, 1796."

Colman in a later period, with more modesty, thus adverted to Caleb Williams:

"The difficulty of transplanting a novel, chapter after chapter, from the library to the theatre, is very obvious. This difficulty I experienced in my play of The Iron Chest, taken from the very interesting novel called 'Caleb Williams;' and, after much cudgelling of my brains, I abandoned the task in great measure, as hopeless. I followed some of the most prominent points, and mingled them with scenes of my own, whereby poor Caleb was greatly 'curtailed of his fair proportions;' but I was overloaded with Mr. Godwin's good things, and driven to relinquish a large portion of them, as sailors are sometimes obliged to lighten the ship by throwing their valuables overboard. I had nothing to do with the political tendency of the book, which is thought by many to inculcate levelling principles, and disrespect for the laws of our country."

The following droll bit of theatrical incident on 'Imitation,' is related by George Colman the younger. After eulogising the talents of Bannister, Mathews, and Yates, as wonderful professors of the art; he states,

"Among my hundred in the Haymarket theatre, there was an actor among them of the name of Davies, well known at the period as *Kiddy* Davies.

"He had served under Garrick, and always spoke contemptuously of the then immediate theatrical times, in comparing them with those of his great master. This man had remained unmimicked for very many years, till Caulfield the actor, bass singer, and very excellent imitator, joined my company, and

hit off the Kiddy's oddities in an instant. He jerked up one shoulder, twisted his mouth a little awry, and begun with, 'Well, I 'll be d—d, things were different in the late Mr. Garrick's time—yes, in the time of the immortal Mr. Garrick deceased.' The manner and utterance were so very exact and so strikingly ludicrous, that all the performers, who had never thought of taking off the Kiddy, went Kiddy Davies mad directly. It was like Sterne's account of the Andromeda of Euripides, which made all the Abderites run about their town, crying 'Cupid, Prince of Gods, and Men.' For one whole summer season I could not go behind my own scenes, without being annoyed by every actor, every little supernumerary brat, hired for a fairy or a fiend, accosting me with 'Well, I 'll be d—d, things were different in the late Mr. Garrick's time.' "

The life of a manager of a theatre is one of harass and perplexity, but we are inclined to think that George Colman the younger had not so much troublesome correspondence with his performers as his father endured before him. As a specimen of the style, we submit to our readers a lengthy epistle of old Macklin's to Colman the elder, while he was a proprietor of Covent Garden Theatre, relative to his comedy of the Man of the World. A diplomatic minister having to arrange a knotty point regarding the division of a large territory, could not have been more guardedly diffuse.

" Sir, August 25, 1767.

" When your letter to me from Southampton came to London, I was on a tour in the country, so that I did not

see it until my return to town; otherwise I should have acknowledged the receipt of it sooner. In the proposals that I sent you on the 9th of August, I endeavoured to be as explicit as possible, and observed, at the same time, that if you should think any part of them improper or inconvenient, that I was willing to alter, or to accommodate them to the general conveniency of your theatre. To this I expected a plain direct answer; but instead of that, or of your specifying the least objection to the matters of agreement which I submitted to your consideration, you sent me counter-proposals, the substance of which, and of the letter that accompanied them, is so darkly expressed as to furnish ample matter for cavil and litigation, and what is still worse, they would give an opportunity to a manager to make a most unjust use of an agreement framed according to the purport of them. But that we may judge clearly of those counter-proposals, I shall here lay before you such articles of them as seem to me to be obscure, and too loose to be relied on; and in their order, I shall take the liberty of offering you my reasons why I think them, as far as I understand them, not quite consistent with equity.

ARTICLE THE FIRST.

> " 'Mr. Macklin to perform twenty nights between the first of October and the twentieth of March, both inclusive, in the farce of Love à la Mode, and a new comedy of five acts, produced by himself, and such other plays as the manager shall appoint.'

" You will please to observe, Sir, that this article is binding on one side only. I am obliged by it to play in Love à la Mode and the new comedy, and in such plays as the manager shall appoint. But the manager, you may observe, has not bound himself, in any part of his proposals, to appoint any other plays for me to act in, nor any number of nights. So that, if he should not appoint other plays,

or does not bind himself to appoint twenty nights for me to act, why then I can act only in Love à la Mode and the new play, and in those too, only as few nights as he shall think proper to appoint. And let me observe, Sir, that such a stroke of management would not be new in your conduct with me; for in the course of a former agreement that I made with you for twenty nights, you frequently refused to appoint a competent number of plays for me to act my twenty nights in; and by that management, I acted but fourteen nights out of the twenty agreed for: and though in those fourteen nights I brought near five hundred pounds more than Mr. Powell and Mrs. Yates in conjunction for the same number of nights in succession, with all the strength and expense of the theatre added to them, yet notwithstanding the omission of the six remaining nights of the twenty, you stopped one hundred and twenty pounds out of the four hundred I ought to have received, though I was always ready to act my twenty nights out when called upon. To this loss I submitted, rather than go to law with you; but as my experience of your manner of making agreements, and of your fulfilling them, has cost me so dearly, you ought not to be offended that I endeavour to be as clear as possible with you in all future matters; and indeed, the following articles of your proposals to me will manifest what your intentions are in this business, and the necessity there is of being most explicit and minute in our agreement."

ARTICLE THE SECOND.

"'The nights of his (Macklin's) performance to be distributed according to the pleasure of the manager.'

"This article is binding only on Macklin, who is to obey such distribution of nights as the manager's pleasure shall direct, which, as observed above, may be only five or six nights out of the twenty; for still the manager carefully

avoids binding himself down to call on Macklin to act any certain number of nights; though the number intended is plainly twenty—and the mutual emolument of that number of nights, to the parties, the evident foundation and intention of the agreement; which intention, every one of your articles, in my opinion, is dexterously calculated to destroy; though some of them are more speciously suggested than others, of which the immediate following one, is a striking, though a subtle instance."

ARTICLE THE THIRD.

" ' Mr. Macklin to be paid twenty pounds, for each of the said twenty nights of his performance.'

" Here Macklin is not, according to his proposals to Mr. Colman, to have twenty pounds certain, for twenty nights, provided he will, when called upon, act up to that number. No, he is to have twenty pounds for each night of his performance only, the number of which nights must depend on the will of the manager."

ARTICLE THE FOURTH.

" ' In case the new comedy should fail.'

" Here, Sir, I must beg leave to stop, even upon the first clause of this extraordinary article, in order to observe, that did the profit on your part depend entirely, or in any material degree, on the success of the comedy, so as, in speculation, obviously to lessen the prospect of your profit, this precaution of failure might have its fairness and its use: yet, even in that case, Sir, I think that whatever mark or token your judgment deems to be a failure of this comedy, ought, in justice, sure, to be expressed previously in this fourth article. I grant that the mark of failure may be lodged within the equity of your own impartial breast. But men love to have the law promulged. Conscience, formerly, they say, was an unerring judge, but of late years it hath been so manufactured by patriots,

courtiers, Change-alley brokers, ministers of state, sometimes by managers of theatres too—nay, and even where one would least expect it, by lawyers themselves, who are, you know, the legal watchmen, and detectors of such ingenuity: I say, such is the nature of the human machine now-a-days, that men, in similar cases to ours, do not like to rest their property or agreement on the emotions of conscience; as those of them that relate to justice and fair dealing may be tardy, especially in matters of criticism.

"Besides, you know too, that as you are a party, it would be contrary to the rules of natural justice, that you should be the sole judge in your own cause.

"But suppose, Sir, that this comedy, by your critical touchstone, should be found on the proving, to be of as trifling unpleasurable matter, or of as flimsy a texture, and as unprofitable as some modern pieces that might be pointed out. I say, suppose this should be the consequence of the operation of your private touchstone! Yet still I think that *that* proof, as it may be partial, is not of so convincing a nature, nor the point itself of so material a consideration in this agreement as to oblige you thus dexterously, and let me add, thus rigorously, to seek a power to deprive me of any part of the four hundred pounds that I demand for the use of my talents and my labour for twenty nights, or by our not agreeing, to defeat yourself of the advantage I may be of to your theatre; consequently to your fellow-managers. For your theatrical accounts will tell you, Sir, that, in all probability, without the aid of the comedy in question, I can bring more money to your house in twenty nights than your whole company; that is, provided you will act the part of a fair and honest manager, which is to appoint a competent number of plays for me to act in, with Love à la Mode.

"This assertion, at first reading, may raise your mirth, perhaps, and be called a boast. But upon reflection, and a small exertion of candour, you will find it is not of that

species, but an uncontrovertible opinion, fairly founded on the accounts of your theatre, on the nights that I have played there, compared with those of your company for the same number of nights. Therefore, not the spirit of boasting, but the necessity of truth and fair argument, have forced the assertion from me; but, Sir, the whole matter hinges on one plain proposition. If you will appoint a proper number of plays for me to act in, there can be no doubt of there being great houses for twenty nights, in which case I shall not be defeated nor tricked out of any part of my four hundred pounds. If you will not appoint them, why then, Sir, any failure of the receipts, or in the number of the twenty nights, ought to be placed to your mismanagement, not to my inability: nor to the failing of the comedy, which comedy, like every other new piece, is in its nature a mere matter of risk, not of insurance by the emolument of an author, and merely as a venture, Sir, it is thrown into this agreement; not from a supposed want of power in me to attract great audiences for twenty nights without it, but from the honest vanity that I feel, as an author and an actor, of making the agreement as profitable as I can to the managers that employ me; and of adding the novelty and variety of a new piece to the entertainment of the public on the nights that I shall act. And should your dramatic touchstone be possessed of so nice an antipathy to the errors or dulness of this comedy, and prove so effectually severe as to deprive me of the pleasure of my thus endeavouring to entertain the public, by your insisting on a mode of agreement that would entitle you, at will, to curtail the greater part of my twenty nights; why then, Sir, in that case, I confess I should not think favourably either of your morals, or of your skill as a manager; nor do I believe that any person who knows the value of common sense, and fair dealing in business, would think more kindly of you than I should on that occasion; but, Sir, the whole of this fourth article taken together, may, perhaps, do more justice

to your judgment, your spirit, and your intention as a manager, than any article or argument that has been yet advanced in this letter, therefore the whole must be laid before you.

> " ' In case the new comedy should fail—a proportionable deduction to be made from the number of the above twenty nights of Mr. Macklin's performance.'

" It is worth observing, Sir, with what dexterity each article of your proposals gradually rises, and mutually strengthens each other, in your design of shaping such a kind of an agreement as would permit me to receive only just so much of my proposed four hundred pounds as your generosity should allow me. As you yourself are often remarkable for a lively metaphor, I hope you will give me leave to sport one that I think is not quite unapt on this occasion, for it is of an infernal nature. This fourth article, I think, may be called the Cloven Foot of your proposals, which begins to shew itself through the veil of specious expression that has been so carefully thrown over it. But, without metaphor or allegory, it appears in every article of your proposals that, instead of acting with that liberal, encouraging spirit that should direct a manager of a theatre, you seem to be studying only how to hamper and embarrass. At least I am sure in this article you have greatly hampered my understanding, for what, in fair dealing, common sense, and common justice, you mean ' by a proportionable deduction of my twenty nights,' I own I cannot comprehend; but suppose that from that expressive term, deduction, a meaning should be guessed at? What shall we do with that equitable term, proportionable? Must that too, like the touchstone of the failing of the comedy, be left entirely to the conscientious emotions of your equity? Why, then, Sir, as I observed above, your proportionable deduction may be fifteen or sixteen nights, for there is nothing in your proposals to the contrary, by which manœuvre I may be

detained in the bonds of disappointment, I might have said, of a manager's deceit, from the 1st of October to the 20th of March, for fourscore or a hundred pounds, instead of four hundred. But for a moment, Sir, pray let me ask, what reason from your experience of my use to your theatre, can you, or any fair judgment, assign for any deduction at all in this agreement, proportionable or otherwise? when, if you will but oblige yourself to appoint a certain number of plays for me to act in for twenty nights in the space of five months, with Love à la Mode, your theatre, if we may judge by experience, I say, will constantly be full on those nights; and this opinion, Sir, is not mine alone, but, by what I can learn from common conversation, it seems to be the general opinion of the public, nay, I believe it is even your own opinion too; therefore your hesitating about so advantageous an agreement, the unpopular state of your company considered, is a mystery to every person that I have heard speak of it, who all agree that something more is meant by your conduct in this affair than plainly meets the understanding.

"But as an instance, nay a proof that I think the houses will be great on the nights that I shall act, I here again offer you what I offered you last year, and this year in your late proposals; which is, to relinquish the four hundred pounds that I demand, and to give you one hundred and eighty pounds for the money that shall be received on each night of the twenty nights, so that all I shall desire for my labour and the use of my writings for the twenty nights is only a benefit in February, and the surplus money received on each night after you have taken out your hundred and eighty pounds. This proposal makes it a clear point that you may have a certain profit of near a hundred pounds a night, for twenty nights, by an agreement with me; should you not choose the adventure of giving me four hundred pounds certain, and a benefit for my acting in 'Love à la Mode,' the new comedy, and whatever plays besides you shall

previously settle for that number of nights. But to your next and last article, which leaves no room for a single doubt about your design in this affair."

ARTICLE THE FIFTH.

"'Whenever the receipts or exhibition of the comedy shall fall below one hundred and fifty pounds, it shall be in the power of the manager to discontinue the performance of it.'

Concerning this article, Sir, I must, without ceremony, take the liberty of expostulating with your morals, as well as with your knowledge and your ingenuity. You know, Sir, that in the run of a new piece of the greatest merit, it may, on some particular night, nay indeed, in my theatrical records, it ever has, fallen greatly below its average receipts.

"You know, too, that a manager may so politically and injuriously manage that it shall fall below one hundred and fifty pounds. I say he may, for reasons best known to himself. And now, Sir, in such a case, accidental or contrived, let me appeal to your morals, particularly those that relate to a theatrical law-giver, for such I find you are determined to be. Would you then be so cruel as to make this ingenuity of a manager, and this failing of one night, incidental to every new piece, a cause for you to dictate this prohibitory law, merely that you might have the power of discontinuing a new piece, in order to destroy a portion, or the whole of a writer's expected gain. This would be ruling with a rod of iron, indeed; such a law might furnish opportunities for malevolence, revenge, and envy, to gratify their appetites; but it never would tend to encourage writers, or to improve the English drama.

"From a few such laws, Sir, the world would be apt to stile you the Draco of the English theatre, and what was severely said of the great Athenian law-giver, might with justice be applied to the Covent Garden Draco, that he wrote his laws, not with ink but blood, so cruelly would they operate on writers and actors.

" But, Sir, without allusions, let me request you to consider what the criterion of your law of prohibition is.

" One hundred and fifty pounds; enormous! unheard of! unequitable! A criterion by which the theatre gains, as I have been informed, fifty pounds; and yet the manager claims by compact with an author a power of discontinuing such a piece, in order to make a proportionable deduction from the reward of the writer. A reward not given by the manager, but by the favour of the public. But pray, Sir, on discontinuing a play that brought fifty pounds profit, or, on your rejecting my offer of one hundred and eighty pounds per night, which would be eighty pounds profit for twenty nights, in such a case ought you not, in justice to your character as a manager, and to the trust that you exercise over the property of your fellow managers, I say, ought you not to be certain that the receipts of your houses will never fall below one hundred and eighty pounds? If they should, you know, so far you injure the property by refusing that sum.

" I have heard of many tricks, and shufflings, and illiberal hardships that avarice and the insolence of office have laid upon authors and actors, but never of anything so discouraging as this of stopping a new play, when it brings an undoubted profit to a theatre; and that too, for no other end, than to curtail an author's reward. Pray, Sir, did you ever make this proposal to Mr. Hull, Mr. Bickerstaff, Mrs. Lennox, Mr. Cumberland, or to any other author? Has any new piece, during your management, fallen below the criterion of one hundred and fifty pounds? I am sure some of them did fall below that criterion; and yet, you did not, that I ever heard, claim or exercise that condemnatory power. The malignant pleasure of being the legislator of that egregious law, the inauspicious genius of the theatre reserved for you; and the hardship of being the first victim to it, your memorable management intends for me.

But, before you finally resolve to carry such a law into execution, let me advise you to ask yourself if such a measure would be wise in you as a manager, entrusted as the middle man between the public and their entertainment, and the author who is to furnish it? Besides, Sir, recollect that you yourself wrote for the stage before you were a manager: did Mr. Garrick impose such a law on you? or, did he even hint it to you? if he had, would you have submitted to such an unprecedented, arbitrary, unreasonable stretch of power? Nay, since you have been a manager of the theatre, and the sole judge and rewarder of your own merit, a state of as delicate a trust as possibly can exist in the ordinary course of human dealings, and in men of principle, or who have the least sense of character or moral decency, it is a state that always excites the most cautious conduct, and the nicest notions of equity. In this opportunity of selfishness, and of conduct that might be liable to suspicion, it would have been a noble mark of an equitable mind — a lover of rectitude, and of a chary honour, to have shown the world that you scorned, sordidly, to avail yourself of your dominion and your trust in the gratification of your avarice, or your vanity as a man and an author.

"I am sure, whatever your practice has been, that your theory must allow the remark to be just; especially, as you might so easily have established that laudable unsuspecting character, only by imposing the same law upon yourself as an author, that you now offer to impose upon me.

"This conduct would have been the mark of a mind wherein the moral elements were well mixed; and men then, with justice, might have stood up and said to all the world, this is indeed a man, and a fair fellow-manager and partner; but now, that point is *sub judice;* therefore, all tongues should be silent on it, until justice bids them speak.

"All that now remains then is, to ask you a few plain questions. 'Did you impose that law upon yourself? was it not necessary by analogy, that you should have done it? Did the receipts to your 'Man and Wife,' on any nights, fall below one hundred and fifty pounds? if you answer in the affirmative, I ask, did you discontinue 'Man and Wife,' or did you make a proportionable deduction from your emoluments as an author, in consequence of the low receipts to it, and of the enormous expense of a three-act piece in prose, that stands unexampled; and for which, though it was cut in a few weeks into a common farce of two acts, you rewarded yourself by two benefits, though, by the usage of the theatre, you should only have rewarded yourself with one. I have now, Sir, gone through your proposals, and the probable effect of them, had I agreed to their purport; if any thinking or expression has trespassed on the law of decency, it must have been mere escapes, not intentions to irritate; and that you must attribute as much to the unequitable design that appeared to me on your side, which naturally excites animadversion, as to any quickness of spirit on mine. The comments are long, I grant; indeed, rather tedious than entertaining to you I am afraid, but the text, as a very old writer observes, was like the ways of a litigious cunning man, specious, subtle, and dexterously obscure: to detect the reserve and scope of which you are sensible, require a larger space than the ordinary ingenuity of an ordinary genius, and that, Sir, must be my apology.

"I must close this letter with a remark on managers of theatres in general, who in many things resemble the managers of States; particularly in matters relative to dominion, ability, and integrity. On these points there is not anything they hate so much as truth—except the man who speaks it. For which reason, I assure you, Sir, I should not have risked your displeasure on either of those points, in the present case, had I not thought that truth, though it

made against you, would be the best argument I could use to a gentleman of your turn of thinking, in order to show the nature of your proposals, the fairness and utility of my own; and by that effect to induce you to an agreement upon equitable terms, and fairly expressed.

I am, Sir, with great respect,
Your most obedient and devoted servant,

CHARLES MACKLIN."

To George Colman, Esq.

This is a very clever letter: a much better controversial epistle than any Actor of the present day would, or probably *could* write.

The letter and the man, are in perfect character; but the reader must look at the old fellow, with all his early prejudices against managers, with his bitter, uncontrolable, sarcastic spirit; still he contrives to impress you with the justice of the case.

Imagine the delight of the Manager Colman on coming down to his breakfast table, probably anticipating a quiet meal, but finding this stupendous packet of woes, from Mr. Macklin, staring him in the face; a certain number of the lines, though delivered with somewhat of the language of respect, containing the most caustic remarks, and deliberate insults—and insults from a man, too aged to enter the lists with!

CHAPTER IX.

1795—1802.

Doctor Arnold—Haymarket Theatre 1796—Elliston from Bath—Projected Entertainment in Lent—Suppressed by the Lord Chamberlain—'My Night Gown and Slippers'—S. J. Arnold—Munden—Mrs. Davenport—The Heir at Law—Supposed derivation of the character of Dr. Pangloss—The Italian Monk—Mrs. Abington—Blue-Beard—O'Keefe—Blue Devils—Henry Johnson—False and True—Death of John Palmer—Feudal Times—Fortune's Frolic—Castle of Sorrento—Sighs—Red-Cross Knights—The Poor Gentleman—Obi—Point of Honour—What a Blunder—The Review—The Gipsy Prince—Michael Kelly—The Corsair—The Voice of Nature—Two Harveys—Novel plan for opening the Haymarket.

The annexed letter from Colman the younger to Dr. Arnold, will prove the high consideration he had for him.

"September 8th, 1795, Piccadilly.

"My Dear Arnold,

"I am so eager to convince you of your mistake, that what is to follow, (and God knows how I shall word it!) will probably appear as a jumble; but you have jumbled my feelings about it with your letter, so you must e'en swallow the mixture you have made. Long, my dear Arnold, as I have been in the habit of meeting you, believe me, I never met you without pleasure; and if my hatchet

face and melancholy muscles have now and then (when we have accidentally met) exhibited more solemnity than usual, attribute it to some previous and recent vexation, which is ever occurring in my business. In short, attribute it to anything but coolness towards you, which, upon the word of a friend, I never for a single moment felt. When I was a boy I was taught to regard you, and long before this thirty-third year of my life, you have convinced me that my teacher was in the right. Do not suppose me frivolous enough to fly off from an old friend upon groundless pique; and do not suppose me wrong-headed enough to fancy I have a right to be piqued at all because I have been a delinquent. You have made my excuses very delicately for me about your son, where, to say the truth, I know not well what excuse to make from myself. However, I will endeavour at one, when I see you. We are to meet, I understand, to-morrow, at the banker's. I could almost be angry at your mistake, but it has drawn so kind and friendly a letter from you, that I find, upon striking a balance, I receive more pleasure than pain from the circumstance.

Believe me, my dear Arnold,

Sincerely and affectionately your's,

G. Colman."

The Haymarket season of 1796, commenced on the 11th of June, with Peeping Tom, The Liar, and a new farce called 'Banian Day.' Palmer was the stock actor of all-work, and Fawcett was retained as principal low comedian: Charles Kemble, Miss Decamp, Aickin, Mrs. Gibbs, &c. were then amongst the utilitarians. On the 21st, O'Keefe, produced a new piece in three Acts, entitled 'The Magic Banner,' but not with his usual success. On the 4th of July, John Bannister rejoined the

company; and Elliston came from the Bath theatre, and played Octavian, Sheva, and other characters, in a style that promised well for his after celebrity; Sylvester Daggerwood (altered from New Hay in the Old Market), by Colman, aided by the imitations of Caulfield, was very attractive. Cumberland brought forward a play called 'Don Pedro,' which was a failure. In this day, we smile at the idea of Jack Bannister acting Hamlet, and the Prince of Wales, in Henry the Fourth. The play bill announced his performance of the latter character *for that night only*, on which a contemporary critic remarks, 'so much the better.' The theatre closed September 16, for the benefit of Waldron the Prompter, and Sub-manager.

Early in 1797 Colman commenced writing an entertainment which he had projected to be performed at the Haymarket during Lent; but which the interference of the Lord Chamberlain prevented. He then published a portion of it under the title of 'My Night Gown and Slippers; or, Tales in Verse; written in an elbow chair, by George Colman the younger.' The tales were three in number, the 'Maid of the Moor, or the Water Fiends' (a burlesque on the then existing rage for German ballads), the others were the 'Newcastle Apothecary,' and 'Lodgings for Single Gentlemen:' the whole were connected by a conversation between 'Tom, Dick, and Will, an alehouse triumvirate,' who rail at modern poets and novel writers: The Newcastle Apothecary was avowedly an imitation of the manner of Peter Pindar. This little volume was most

favourably received by the public, and went through several editions.

The following letter from Colman to Dr. Arnold, alludes to the stoppage of the entertainment.

" Sunday Night, Piccadilly.

" My Dear Arnold,

" I feel more unpleasantly than I can tell you (so I leave you to conceive it) in writing to you on money subjects. Take, therefore, a plain *tale:* though tales, now-a-days, according to Lord Bishops and Lord Chamberlains, are of ill-omen.

" I am so thrown back in consequence of the failure of of our *Lenten Entertainment* (which I reckoned on as a certainty), that I am obliged to apply to those who are more 'blessed with affluence' than I am. Can you, my dear Arnold, lend me two hundred pounds? for the repayment of which, in the summer (or before), I give you the word of an old friend, and any other security in my power. I am in need of this occasional supply to take up a bill, which is soon becoming due; and I have every thing but an absolute promise of the renewal of accommodation after I have honoured my acceptance, so that you see, I was not hasty in saying I might probably reimburse you *before* our Haymarket season commences.

" They who ought to *hunt* for me upon those emergencies, are *bad dogs* at best, or I should not apply to you. I am going on Thursday to Mountain's. Pray send me a line in the course of to-morrow.

Truly your's,

G. Colman."

The next letter also relates to the Lent entertainment.

" My Dear Arnold, Tuesday, Piccadilly.

" I have just parted with Mr. Hull, who has advised me to send the letter to Lord Salisbury, and promises to speak

to him on the subject when they meet (in two or three days) in town. The business, however, seems to wear an unpleasant aspect. Hull read the sketch of our plan, and says he does not suppose that any objection will be made to it on the score of morality, but that the Bishop of London may be the obstacle. The mischief, I find, originates in the actors, who gave a scrambling and improper jumble the year before last in the Haymarket, on which the Bishop wrote to suppress all entertainments except Oratorios in Lent. Now could we by any means get an immediate application to the Bishop of London in our favour? that we may have it to say to Lord Salisbury, when he comes to town, that the Bishop has no objection. This would smooth our way prodigiously. Have you no channel, no influence that you could directly kick up, to be of weight with this reverend divine? Let somebody give a sketch of our plan to him.

"Perhaps you have power enough with the Bishop of Rochester to induce him to stir in our favour. We certainly should not lose a moment. Will you give me a call to-morrow?

Your's ever, G. C."

From Colman to Dr. Arnold.

"7th March, 1797, Piccadilly.

"I cannot leave town, and I am just going, without sending you a line to thank you, my dear Arnold, for your letter. Alas! we are two unlucky dogs!

"Could you have assisted me now, it would have rejoiced me; and I am sure you would if you could. I feel your explanation and intentions to be most kind and friendly.

Ever truly your's,

G. Colman."

The following letter from Colman to Dr. Arnold, on the subject of money, is very characteristic of the writer.

"18th May, 1797, Mountain's.

"My Dear Arnold,

"I appointed to meet your friend Savignac, on Thursday next, that we might go to Blackfriars on that day at eleven; but we neither named the precise time, nor the place of our meeting. Will you be so good as to fix this matter with him, and send me a line? He mentioned to me that you had drawn out stock which would make our matter up, about eleven hundred pounds instead of the thousand, and that you said I might have it if I had occasion for it. On deliberation, and looking over my arrangements, I will, if you hold in the same mind, accept the offer and make the annuity accordingly; and now, my dear Arnold, let me thank you (although I am awkward at thanks, and say much less than I feel) for your goodness and real friendship on this occasion. I hate all money transactions in general; they are damned nauseous, nasty, sour things, that go against my stomach; but you have contrived to throw into your draughts such a mixture of warmth and kindness, that I shall never think of it without pleasure. I return to town on Wednesday, and am working tightly for the summer. I was in some hope that Robin would have dropped in upon me. Remember me to him, and all your's.

I am, my dear Arnold,

Your's truly and affectionately,

G. Colman."

By Robin, Colman meant Dr. Arnold's son, who was so christened by him, in consequence of his having produced at the Haymarket his first and successful musical afterpiece, called 'Auld Robin Gray.'

The summer performances of 1797 began about the usual period. Munden was engaged in the place of Bannister: or we should rather say, that he was intended to succeed Parsons. Mrs. Davenport was retained this season for the old women, formerly played by Mrs. Hopkins,—a great improvement; and the sudden retirement of that charming vocalist, Miss Leak, gave an opportunity for a young lady of the name of Andrews (another pupil of Dr. Arnold) to make her *début*. A farce entitled 'The Irish Legacy' was produced at this time, but without success. It was a very early work of a young author, who subsequently wrote with considerable popularity, Samuel James Arnold; the music was composed by his father.

The best production of this season, was the 'Heir at Law.' Of the merits of this agreeable comedy there can be but one opinion. The characters (the amusing Pangloss, perhaps, excepted) are true pictures of common life. Mrs. Inchbald remarked, "Invention, observation, good intention, and all the powers of a complete dramatist, are in this comedy displayed, except one—*taste* seems wanting; but this failure is evidently not an error in judgment, but an escape from labour. The finer colours for more polished mankind, would demand the artist's more laborious skill." With all due deference to the fair critic, the dramatic author, to be effective on the stage, must work freely, and, like the scene-painter (to use a technical term), with the pound brush!

Of the comedy of the Heir at Law, a critic has

remarked of Doctor Pangloss, one of the most pleasant of the *dramatis personæ*, that the originality of the character may be reasonably disputed, by a reference to 'Fortune in Her Wits,' a comedy translated from the 'Naufragium Joculare' of Abraham Cowley, and printed in 1705. A few speeches may support this assertion, first noticing that this presumed original of the modern pedant is called 'Sententious Gerund,' and travels to Dunkirk with his pupils, Grinn and Shallow :—

(Act I., Scene 1.)—*Enter* Gerund, Shallow, *and* Grinn.

Gerund. *Egressi optatâ Troes potiuntur arena.* How lucky was the omen to light on that sentence of the Prince of poets, Virgil.

* * * * * *

Grinn. Is it not very hard, I cannot so much as make one little jest, on my arrival in a strange land ?

Shallow. Hey—ho—

Gerund. *Cur imo gemitum de pectore ducis*, according to the poet.

Shallow. Ah, tutor, I can't think without a sigh of that fine breakfast I presented the fish with, when we first put to sea.

Gerund. *Quis talia fundo, Myrmidonum Dolopumes aut duri Miles Ulissi.* (*Ulissi* is put there *euphoniæ grâ*) *temperet a lacrymis*—according to the poet! Truly, the antients observed very wisely, fire, water, and woman, are three evils.

Shallow. Tutor, there is one thing more that has been in my head ever since, and that is, when upon the deck we could see land afar off, still the nearer we came, that seemed to run the further from us. This is an observation of my own, Tutor.

Gerund. Ay, Pupil, *per varias causas, per tot discrimina verum tendimus in*—(I don't know where) according to the poet!"

It is fair to conjecture, that Colman, who was a reader of old plays, took his idea of the learned and

amusing Doctor from the above character: and it hardly need be mentioned that the appellation of Pangloss is derived from the 'Candide' of Voltaire.

Mr. Boaden produced this year a piece called 'The Italian Monk,' in which John Palmer, C. Kemble, and Miss Decamp, exerted their talents most effectively. It was successful, and the season of 1797 terminated to the satisfaction of manager and public.

This year the Covent Garden Managers induced the celebrated Mrs. Abington to re-appear on the stage, and Colman, to introduce her, wrote a very clever prologue.

On the 16th of January, 1798, Colman produced the romance of Blue Beard, at Drury-Lane Theatre. As a dramatic piece little can be said in its favour, but the *spectacle* was grand in the extreme: the procession was the best regulated effect of pageantry that had been at that time witnessed on the stage. Michael Kelly was very happy in the selection of the music; Mrs. Crouch, in the zenith of her beauty, was the original Fatima; Miss Decamp gained great popularity by her performance and singing in Irene; Bannister and Suett were very pleasant; and the celebrated Madame Parisot danced exquisitely. The Castle Spectre and Blue Beard ran together for a great number of nights, with unprecedented success.

About this period, O'Keefe was preparing for publication a complete collection of his dramatic works, for which he was soliciting a subscription, at the head of which was the name of the Prince of Wales,

who sent the blind bard fifty guineas; the Dukes of York and Clarence also subscribed liberally. Mr. Harris generously granted O'Keefe permission to publish all the performances of which he had purchased the copyright; but Mr. Colman and the Trustees of the Haymarket Theatre for some cause refused to allow the Dead Alive, Son-in-Law, Agreeable Surprise, Peeping Tom, and the Young Quaker, (which had been purchased by the elder Colman for a mere trifle, to prevent their being represented on the boards of the winter houses), to be included in this publication. There was illiberality in this refusal; for had the pieces in question been sold to a publisher, the property would by that time have reverted to the author, more than fourteen years (the then limited period allowed by the Copyright Act) having elapsed since the last five dramas were produced. Mr. Erskine was consulted, whether, in point of law, the detention of literary property after the term prescribed by act of Parliament was justifiable, but the opinion of that eminent counsel left O'Keefe without any hopes. Colman the elder, in his agreements, had turned his own legal knowledge to good account.

On the 24th of April Colman produced Blue Devils (a translation from the French of Patrat), at Covent-Garden Theatre, for Fawcett's benefit. This piece failed; though when it was afterwards produced at the Haymarket it became a favourite piece, and has continued so to the present day. On the 12th of June, the little theatre opened with the Deaf Lover, the Battle of Hexham, and Blue Devils. On the 23rd,

a drama was brought out, entitled the Inquisitor; it was attributed to Holcroft, but from the reception it met with, no one was eager to acknowledge it. Henry Johnston, then denominated the Scotch Roscius, made a favourable stand during this season; and on the 21st of July, Mr. Boaden's play of The Cambro-Britons was represented, and with the aid of Munden, Suett, J. Johnstone, C. Kemble, H. Johnston, Robert Palmer, Miss Decamp, Mrs. Gibbs, and Mrs. Bland, was successful.

On the 11th of August was produced the drama of False and True, or the Irishman in Italy, in which Johnstone stood prominent. Colman wrote him a song that had a very whimsical effect on the stage; it was addressed to an old coquette, by Paddy O'Raffarty, who professes to be violently enamoured of her charms. The words in *italics* were given *aside*, with indescribable humour by Johnstone.

" The sweet kiss of my dear—*is like musty old hay;*
Fal de ral, fal de ral, la.
She 's as lovely as morning—*a morning that 's gray;*
Fal de ral, &c.
Nature's sweet red and white in her countenance lies;
Fal de ral, &c.
For she 's white in the lips, and she 's red in the eyes;
Fal de ral, &c.
Your look is just that which is majesty styl'd;
Fal de ral, &c.
So awful—*it frightens man, woman, and child;*
Fal de ral, &c.
I 'll wed you in church, just to shew my regard;
Fal de ral, &c. &c.
Then lovingly—*bury you in the churchyard;*
Fal de ral, &c. &c.

On the 2nd of August this year, John Palmer dropped down dead on the stage at Liverpool. This is not the only awful instance of sudden death under similar circumstances, for it will be recollected that Molière died on the stage. He was acting Le Malade Imaginaire, when he was seized with a real illness that proved fatal.

On the 18th of August, the Heir at Law and the Children in the Wood were performed at the Opera House, by Mr. Colman's company, for the benefit of the orphan daughters of John Palmer, which produced about 700 guineas. On the 29th of August, Charles Kemble essayed the difficult character of Shylock, and Mrs. Henry Johnston made her appearances in Ophelia and Roxalana. The theatre closed after a very successful season.

On the publication of a third edition of The Iron Chest, Colman thought proper to omit the motto, the offensive preface, the advertisement, and the postscript. If this did not amount to a formal recantation of that scurrility which did more harm to the author than to the actor, it showed at least that Colman was sorry for having employed it.

On the 19th of January, 1799, Colman produced a melo-dramatic romance at Drury Lane, entitled Feudal Times, or the Banquet Gallery ; it was showy, but dull. There was little novelty in the plan, neither interest nor ingenuity in the construction of the story ; nor was there anything attractive in it upon the stage except what was supplied by the composer, the mechanist, and the scene-painter. The

amazing success of the play of Pizarro induced the manager of the little theatre, at the beginning of the season, to bring out a translation of a drama by Kotzebue, called Family Distress. This was not relished, but amends were soon made by the production of Till Allingham's capital farce of Fortune's Frolic: Fawcett was admirable in Robin Roughhead. Pizarro still kept Drury Lane open with enormous houses during the dog-days, and this very considerably embarrassed the Haymarket manager. The Castle of Sorrento was the next piece brought forward, and was successful. This was written by Colonel, afterwards Sir Ralph Hamilton. Mr. Attwood composed some very pretty and effective music for it.

On the 30th of July, a comedy, entitled Sighs, or the Daughter, was successfully represented. This was a translation from the German, by Prince Hoare. A beautiful air, composed and charmingly sung by Mrs. Bland, was introduced, "'Twas in the solemn midnight hour;" the words were by Cumberland. On the 21st of August, Mr. Holman produced a drama, called the Red-Cross Knights, an alteration of the Robbers of Schiller. The theatre closed on the 14th of September, with an address by Fawcett, who had proved himself a most industrious actor and spirited stage manager.

On the 11th of February, 1800, Colman brought before the public his comedy of the Poor Gentleman, at Covent Garden Theatre, with great success. It was represented for many nights with roars of

laughter. Munden, Lewis, Fawcett, and Mrs. Mattocks were irresistible in it. The Poor Gentleman was of considerable service to the treasury.

The following letter from Colman to Dr. Arnold alludes to pecuniary transactions.

Sunday, February 23, 1800,
"My Dear Arnold, Piccadilly.

"I was in hopes of seeing you to-day, at Fawcett's, but it seems he is obliged to postpone our meeting. Pray let me know at what office the life was insured, and I will not neglect attending there in the early part of the week. I scarcely know what to say to you on the subject of my trespass on your patience. Sheridan's most injurious encroachment upon my last season, and, since that, some very unlucky circumstances and untoward disappointments have thrown me back.

"The days of summer will come round, when I hope and trust the sun will not shine inauspiciously upon me. I am eager for an opportunity of doing all in my power on your account, who have done so much on mine.

"Ever truly yours,
G. Colman."

The summer season at the Haymarket of 1800, put forth its blossoms about the customary period, and the harvest was unusually fruitful; for the little Theatre made a great hit with an interesting pantomimical drama, called 'Obi; or, Three Fingered Jack.' This production was decidedly the best of its class. It was arranged by Fawcett, who had accidentally met with a narrative on which it was founded—a historical fact recorded by Dr. Moseley

in his 'Treatise on Sugar.' The recital was highly exciting, and was very accurately followed in the action of the pantomime, which was original on the stage at the time. The incidents and situations were well contrived by Fawcett. Baron Trenck, Caleb Williams, Count Fathom, and Gil Blas have met with adventures nearly as perilous; but they had not been previously so forcibly introduced to the eye. Difficulties gradually presenting themselves, had not been so demonstratively, and unexpectedly, yet naturally surmounted. It was justly denominated a pantomimical drama, for it had the merit of dramatic arrangement. Charles Kemble was the animated representative of Three Fingered Jack, and Miss Decamp displayed the graces of her figure and accomplishments, which, in this line of the drama, she at that period, incontestably possessed. Farley exhibited his usual cleverness. The music, principally composed by Dr. Arnold, was most appropriate, and the scenery by Whitmore very much surpassed any former effort of the Haymarket Theatre. This successful piece was followed up on the 15th of July by Charles Kemble's elegant adaptation of 'Le Deserteur of Mercier,' under the title of 'The Point of Honour.' By the way, Monsieur Mercier was indebted to a German original for this play. The excellent acting of C. Kemble, Barrymore, Fawcett, Miss Decamp, and Miss Chapman, rendered the Point of Honour very attractive. On the 14th August, Holman produced a comic opera, entitled 'What a Blunder?' There was a bustle and variety in this piece that kept the spectators

continually alive. In it Irish Johnstone had an original character (Sir Sturdy O'Tremor), a stout Hibernian in the plenitude of health, imagining himself in the last stage of a consumption: Johnstone was exquisitely ludicrous as the hectic Hercules. Mrs. Mountain made an advance in the good graces of the public in this opera, the music of which was by John Davy, a pupil of the celebrated Jackson of Exeter. Mr. Davy was an original composer, on whose melodies subsequent aspirants have worked. Let any one compare Davy's beautiful air of 'Just like love is yonder Rose,' with C. Horn's 'Cherry Ripe.' In addition to the plums of this fortunate season, Colman on the 31st of August presented his 'Review; or, the Wags of Windsor.' Without plot or interest, the dialogue and the characters are so pleasant, that if in 1840, the Review, even tolerably acted, is amusing, what must the farce have been, supported as it was forty years ago!

Nearly, if not entirely, the whole of this capital farce was written, or rather put together by Colman in sudden haste at Dr. Arnold's table in Duke-street. The character and principal dialogue, &c. of Caleb Quotem, was transferred, without much addition, from a piece called 'Throw Physic to the Dogs,' which had failed a season or two before. Songs which Dr. Arnold had by him, ready cut and dried, were adapted, and even characters introduced to sing them. 'A Poor Little Gipsy I wander forlorn,' sung by Mrs. Bland, and another ballad sung by Miss Decamp, disguised as a young recruit, were written by Samuel James Arnold, and when so

adapted, proved a high feather in his youthful cap of vanity.

In this season, a letter of strong remonstrance from Dr. Arnold, was sent to Colman, in consequence of a chorus singer having been dismissed by the stage manager without his concurrence; which he considered an improper interference with his department as musical director of the theatre. It was on a point of punctilio, and the Doctor was "a little pot and soon hot." Colman, as it appears by his reply, was compelled to succumb.

"My Dear Arnold, 5th August, 1800.

"Your letter reached me this morning. It is my anxious wish, and it was last night my endeavour, in a conversation with Fawcett, to settle the business in question pleasantly to all parties, but, alas! I have not succeeded. I much lament that a trifling circumstance should occasion so much misunderstanding, and that my attempts as a peace-maker, have been received with so much heat.

"Fisher shall continue in his situation, and I see no impropriety in your sending a letter to Jewell to give him notice of the man's re-instatement; but let me clear up one mistake. Fawcett was originally commissioned by me to discharge Fisher; for, on being simply told that a chorus singer had sent a substitute to perform his business, I held it proper to dismiss him upon the general principle (on which we were both long ago agreed) of suffering no person engaged in the theatre to do their work by deputy. Your subsequent explanation convinced me that Fisher is worthy of consideration, and he is re-established.

I am, my dear Arnold, very truly your's,

G. Colman."

"P. S.—I shall be at the theatre to-morrow evening between eight and nine. Shall I see you there?"

General Fawcett again took the command of the Haymarket troops in 1801, under Field-Marshal Colman; Mrs. Litchfield from Covent Garden, and Powell from Drury Lane, were added to the excellent company. On the 24th of July, a musical entertainment was brought out, entitled 'The Gipsy Prince,' and Kelly (who composed the music) appeared as the hero; Mrs. Mountain and Miss Tyrer were the principal vocalists. On the 29th, Farley produced a grand ballet romance, called 'The Corsair; or, the Italian Nuptials.' H. Johnston, Farley, Menage, and Miss Bell Menage, figured in this pantomime. The music was arranged by the Stock Composer, Dr. Arnold. Without any other novelty, the season proved abundantly profitable, Obi and The Review being very frequently repeated.

The Haymarket season of 1802, was rather unsuccessful: a three-act comedy, entitled 'Beggar my Neighbour,' and which has been laid at Morton's door, failed under the displeasure it excited. A farce, by Oulton, called 'The Sixty-Third Letter,' in which Fawcett caused much laughter in the character of a footman music mad, was a successful absurdity. In this season Mr. Boaden adapted 'Le Jugement de Salomon,' by M. Caigniez, and produced it under the name of 'The Voice of Nature;' and a burletta called 'Fairy Revels,' principally performed by children, followed.

We now return to Colman's own narrative:—

"Among the vicissitudes which time has produced, I forgot to mention the striking change of manners

and fashions. Whether they have ameliorated or grown worse, let the partisans of the old and new schools determine; but, certain it is, we have little of the *vieille cour* behaviour remaining, except perhaps in some persons among the very highest circles. As to costume, a lady's hoop is not to be seen at Court—and there are scarcely six pigtails left in London. When I produced my comedy called 'The Poor Gentleman,' at Covent Garden theatre, in the year 1801, Mrs. Mattocks acted the part of Lucretia Mac Tab in the same dress which she had worn many years previously, as Lucinda, in Love in a Village; with no further alteration of it, than her having grown fatter, or thinner, might require. The gown was what is called a *sack*, with a petticoat over a large hoop. The unlearned in theatricals should be told that Lucinda is a very young spinster, and Lucretia a very old-fashioned old maid.

"It is odd that I should have known two Harveys whose callings, though so very different, caused both one and the other to be the daily and hourly witnesses of scenes which smell of mortality: the first, being the learned Leech, under whose care my father recovered from the first attack of his illness at Margate; the second, the landlord of the Black Dog, at Bedfont, commonly called by corruption Belfound; famed for his *fish-sauce*, and his knowledge and practice of cookery. I am uncertain whether he be still alive, but his well-known, and well-frequented Inn continues, I suppose, to overlook the churchyard, which is remarkable for a

couple of yews, clipped into likenesses, by no means flattering, of the beauteous birds of Juno. I once scrawled some lines at this Inn, in 1802, which I give from memory :—

LINES WRITTEN AT THE INN AT BEDFONT.

HARVEY—whose Inn commands a view
Of Bedfont's church and churchyard too,
Where yew-trees, into peacocks shorn,
In vegetable torture mourn:
Is liable no doubt to glooms,
From 'Meditations on the Tombs:'
But while he meditates, he cooks,
Thus both to quick and dead he looks;
Turning his mind to nothing, save
Thoughts on man's gravy, and his grave.
Long may he keep from churchyard holes
Our bodies, with his Sauce for *Soles!*
Long may he hinder death from beckoning
His guests to settle their last reckoning!"

At the end of the Haymarket theatrical season in 1802, Mr. Colman gave notice that on account of the Winter theatres having of late years extended their performances to an unusually late period, he must, at his next opening, request indulgence for the best company that he could possibly select from Provincial theatres. "When a royal patent," said Mr. Fawcett, who delivered the farewell address, "was about to be granted to the late Mr. Foote, it was inquired, with that justice which characterises the English throne, what annual extent of term might be allowed him, without injury to the theatrical patents then existing in the metropolis. The proprietors of the Winter theatres were interrogated on this point; and in consequence of their documents, a patent

was granted to Foote for his life, to open a theatre annually, from the 15th of May to the 15th of September inclusive. The Winter-houses never closed precisely on the commencement of his term—but Foote was *unique*, and depended chiefly on his own writing, and his own acting. A licence was given to the elder Colman, on Foote's death, for the same annual term: but being aware that he could not, like his singularly gifted predecessor, depend on his own individual powers, he engaged a regular company of comedians, chiefly selected from the winter theatres, for whose assistance he was obliged to wait till those theatres closed. He ventured in every shape very deeply on a limited privilege, which this mode of speculation rendered still more limited. The younger Colman, our present proprietor, succeeded his father in the licence, but bought the property, at the expense of several thousand pounds; and thus came into a theatre, where the custom of depending on the movements of the winter-houses has now curtailed his short season of nearly one-third. The object at length in view is, to remedy the evil, without invidious and vain attempts to attack much more powerful theatres, who have an undoubted privilege of acting plays all the year round. The proprietor has no intention of tiring the public ear by a querulous appeal; he admits that others have the fullest right to make their property as productive as possible: he wishes merely to follow their example, and solicits your support in his efforts for establishing a company of actors totally independent of them. There are but three

houses permitted to give you regular *batches* of plays in London; and this house (by far the most humble) sees no reason, when they will all be *making their bread*, on the 15th of May, why even *three* of a trade should not perfectly agree. Should his arrangements succeed, which are, even at this early period, actively forming, you will, on the re-opening of the theatre, greet the return to London of some favourites, who, it is trusted, will find no diminution of your protection. You will witness new and rising merit, which it is your marked practice to foster. There is no theatrical town in the United Kingdom which will not be resorted to, in the hope of procuring you its choicest produce; and, in addition to other authors, you will be entreated early in the season, to show your indulgence to the proprietor's further attempts at dramatic composition; whose pen, he humbly hopes, notwithstanding the long duration of your encouragement, is not yet quite worn out in your service."

This statement was received throughout with frequent marks of approbation; and concluded amidst loud and long continued applause.

CHAPTER X.

1802—1808.

Letter to Dr. Arnold—Proposal to Mathews the York comedian—Engagement of Mathews at the Haymarket—Colman visits York—Tate Wilkinson—Superannuated Company—John Bull produced at Covent Garden—Haymarket opened with the new scheme—Mathews—Elliston—S. J. Arnold—Colman disposes of part of the Theatre—The Tailors—Serious Riot—Liston's first appearance—We Fly by Night—Bannister's Budget—His liberality to Colman—Young—Theodore Hook—The Critic—Mathews's Sir Fretful Plagiary—Leigh Hunt—The Marvellous Physicians—Mrs. Inchbald—Anger of Colman—Correspondence.

In the September of this year (1802) Colman wrote the subjoined letter to Dr. Arnold, who had been suffering from illness.

To Dr. Arnold.

"My Dear Arnold, 15th October, 1802.

"I blush on recurring to the date of your last letter, 30th September, while I am sitting down to answer it to-day. You say 'you trust you are getting better,' and I truly hope the confidence you expressed in your convalescence, when you wrote to me, has been daily strengthening. We are all *croakers* when we are ill; and when I last saw you, I thought you were giving way a little too much to low spirits. For Heaven's sake, if the blue devils pay you a visit, kick them out of your doors as fast as you can. I

know the malignity of their influence; for, about eight years ago, in co-operation with a relaxation of the system, they gave me, what is vulgarly called, *a squeak for my life*, and when, by summoning my resolution, I got rid of them, I wondered why I had been so frightened; and was convinced that they had constituted two-thirds of a disorder which had assumed a very serious aspect.

"Now to something in the shape of business, which, if there be not too much of it, may do you more good than harm, by abstracting you, *pro tempore*, from your ailments.

"Mr. Second has written a most *condescending* letter on the subject of his wife,* which I have put in the fire! and the only answer he will receive to it is my advertisement in the newspapers, which says to all who it may concern, that if I do not answer in ten days, I shall not answer at all. In respect to choruses, band, &c. much is to be done. I have a particular application, from a friend to whom I wish to attend, in respect to a performer on the harpsichord; of that hereafter, but I may probably in a day or two give him a line of introduction to you. If he have merit, I shall thank you to consider him; if he have none, or not sufficient for our purpose, shew him no favour on my score.

"I have a good deal to say to you on private business also. In the course of a week, perhaps sooner, I shall be at your door. But I am so perplexed with, at least *three* different pursuits of consequence, which are all pressing upon me at once, that I cannot fix a day.

God bless you, my dear friend,
affectionately and truly yours,
G. Colman."

The following letter was addressed by Colman to Mathews while he was at York, in pursuance of his plan of raising a *corps dramatique* from the Provinces:

* Mrs. Second, a *third*-rate singer, at the period.

" Theatre Royal, Haymarket,

" Sir, 14th September, 1802.

" Your merits as an actor having been mentioned to me, give me leave to propose an engagement to you for next year in my theatre. It is my intention to commence the season positively on the 15th of next May; and to continue it to the 15th of the following September. Should you think it eligible to embrace the opportunity which I now offer to you, of performing for four months before a London audience, I beg you will be kind enough to inform me on what terms you will give me your assistance. At all events, I shall thank you for a speedy answer, directed to me, at Mr. Jewell's, 26, Suffolk-street, Charing Cross.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

G. Colman."

Several letters passed between them, and Mathews demanded the salary of ten pounds per week. Colman's reply is annexed.

" Sir, Suffolk-street, October 8, 1802.

" The terms which you have proposed are certainly high, and perhaps unprecedented, for a performer who has not yet felt the pulse of a London audience; but the reasons stated for thus fixing your *ultimatum* appear to be founded on justice, to put vanity out of question. I wave, therefore, all mention of any risk incurred on my part in my new speculation, and embrace your offer. But to prevent all mistakes, permit me to state precisely what I conceive to be the engagement. Ten pounds a week and a benefit, of which benefit you pay the usual charges. You will perform from the 15th May to the 15th September inclusive. If you engage in London after your appearance with me, you give me the preference in a re-engagement. If you think any short legal memorandum requisite between us, I am willing to enter into it. If you conceive the letters that pass between us as suffi-

cient, I am quite content that it should remain an agreement *upon honour*. Pray send me two lines, speedily, which will be conclusive. I will, when we meet in the summer, do everything in my power to contribute to your reputation with the public, and your comfort in my theatre.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

G. Colman."

"P. S.—Of course your attendance will be expected in town a week or ten days previously to opening the theatre, as I begin with novelties."

Mathews accepted the engagement, but expressed great anxiety as to a judicious choice of a character in which he might appear before the awful tribunal of a London audience, and inquired whether Mr. Colman positively intended to open with new pieces? Colman wrote in reply the following characteristic epistle.

"Dear Sir, October 23, 1802.

"I am happy to find by your last letter of the 13th that our agreement is completed. You see by the date of this that I take the latitude you offer, when you desire me to inform you of my plans for the opening of the theatre 'at leisure.'

"To give you this information (which I will as well as I now can, for you must naturally be anxious) I send you a parcel of crude hints and disjointed sentences, rather than a perfect system; but from these you will be able to make out a sketch of my general intentions. I will endeavour to be more particular in what most immediately regards yourself. Recollect, however, that there are secrets in the most petty theatrical states, and that I send you the outline of my scheme in confidence.

"New matter, as fast as possible, after the commence-

ment of the season. Certainly an occasional prelude on the first night. A new grand ballet of action almost immediately on the opening. A new light drama (of dialogue) to add to it, after a few nights of its run. New matter to follow the above sooner or later, in proportion as the preceding novelties may hit or miss. The prelude I shall write myself, and shall endeavour to cast in it, or leave out of it, such new performers whose reputation might be served or hurt, by appearing thus abruptly (for the first time) before a London audience. New actors, of whatever merit, cannot expect to be nursed so much, by giving intervals in their appearances, when they come into an established London company. The scheme is new; almost all the actors are new. If we wait for niceties the stage will stand still; off we must go at once! ding dong! helter skelter! and the new troops must commence regular action like the veterans. Now, let us see how this plan will militate against you, premising that I wish to do the best for you which such an undertaking will permit, and that I wish you to suggest anything to me which you think will contribute to your fame. The prelude you may be in, or out of, as you please. I think certainly better out; for as I wish to make you a great gun, it would be a pity to let you off like a squib, in a prelude, at first. When I say this, you need not fear having original characters enough (just as they may turn out, for that rests with the town), in the course of the season. The ballet on the opening, if it succeed, will be a favourable circumstance for you, for it will supply the place of many a light speaking drama (into which you will naturally afterwards be thrown), and give you breathing time. You will not thus be hurried from one character to another night after night, as if the arrangement were otherwise. Here I begin to perceive, from the length of my letter, that I shall put you to the charge of double postage, but I shall make no apology; for, as you have unwittingly sold yourself to a Turk of a manager, I dare say you would

willingly give half-a-crown to know what the tyrant means to do with you.

"Let me now consider your first appearance. It must be immediately on the opening; but it shall be in whatever character you please. This is a subject which requires deliberation, and we have no time to deliberate. You tell me that you have performed in the York theatre the entire range of low comedy! This is a very wide range, indeed! But tell me also, in which part of that range you feel yourself to have succeeded most with the audience. Old men, country boys, dapper servants, mingled characters, like those of Munden, of sentiment and fun, &c. In short, make out a list of what you like, and send it to me. I would advise you to avoid, if possible, in your first appearance, the difficulty (it is a great one to avoid) of encountering comparison.

"First impressions often make or mar. I remember, soon after Munden's first appearance in London, he ate, with uncommon success, a hundred pounds weight of plum-pudding in 'Two Strings to your Bow.' This feat was new to a London audience. He had a good character in it, in which nobody had been seen before. Do you recollect anything in which you might make your appearance, under the same favourable circumstances? When you have recovered from the fatigue of reading this ('tis worse than a part of twenty lengths), send me a line. Be assured, that from the reports I have heard of your merits, and from the candid, clear, manly style of your letters to me, I have your interests, abstracted from my own, fully at heart.

I am, dear Sir, yours sincerely,

G. Colman."

Mrs. Mathews * relates that, "in March 1803, Mr. Colman, accompanied by his son, Captain

* In her very amusing Memoirs of her husband, Charles Mathews.

George Colman, arrived in York; probably induced by an anxiety to see the actor he had taken upon trust, and to satisfy himself, as he hoped to do, that his blind bargain was not likely to prove a lame one. Here commenced a friendship between Mr. Colman and Mr. Mathews, which never suffered a moment's interruption. During Mr. Colman's stay in York, he and his son supped nightly with the young actor at the close of the performance; and it would have been difficult on these occasions, when they separated, to determine which felt most pleased with the other; so that when the manager returned to London he was prepared to welcome a friend, whom he had every expectation, at the same time, of establishing as a favourite with the town. In short, he was immediately impressed with Mr. Mathews's talents, both on and off the stage; and those who have experienced the fascination of Mr. Colman's society, may, without difficulty, understand how completely he charmed his new acquaintance. Mr. Mathews's application for an engagement for his intended wife was answered with cordial kindness. So pleased, indeed, was Mr. Colman with the comedian, that had he been asked to engage his whole family, the request, I believe, would have been complied with: Mr. Mathews, however, had taken his future manager to see the young lady perform Harriet in the Guardian, and she was immediately engaged.

"As might be expected, Mr. Tate Wilkinson's gentleman-like feeling and hospitable habits were displayed on the arrival of this distinguished visitor,

to whom, notwithstanding he came to rob him of his trump card, he could not omit those attentions which a resident is expected to offer to strangers. Although he was at the time much more than usually an invalid, he requested Mr. Colman and his son, the Captain, to dine with him every day during their stay.

"On the first visit there was scarcely more than a family party, Mr. Mathews and Mr. Cummins being the only persons invited to meet them; and it was an early dinner, in order to allow the two actors time to dress for their evening duties. Mr. Colman, who was desirous of enlisting some more recruits for his opening campaign, was naturally inquisitive as to who and what he might expect to see during his short stay, and asked for the bill of fare for the evening, this being the first opportunity of seeing the York performers. He was told the play was to be the School for Scandal. The London manager was pleased at this, and eagerly inquired what sort of *Charles* they had? for at the time he wanted a dashing actor in that line. His attention was directed to a respectable gentleman who sat opposite to him, who had mumbled his dinner, and whose well powdered head had a cauliflower appearance, and his face the visible impress of sixty winters, 'Mr. Cummins is the *Charles*,' said Tate. Mr. Cummins bowed to Mr. Colman with the precision of the old school, in confirmation of the manager's statement. Mr. Colman started, bowed in return, with an unnatural grin of courtesy, and then took a pinch of snuff in nervous haste.

" After a short pause, however, being desirous to do away the appearance of the embarrassed surprise he was too conscious of having shown, Mr. Colman made inquiries as to the ladies of the theatre. Paul and Virginia was mentioned as one of the pieces to be performed in the course of his visit, and he caught at this information in order to ask who was to play *Virginia* (expecting, as he afterwards told Mr. Mathews, that his intended wife, to whom he had been introduced in the morning, would be named); but his attention was directed again to one of the party present, and he was informed that 'Mrs. John,' so Mrs. J. Wilkinson was always called, would personify the youthful heroine. This lady was a bulky matron, who certainly had once been young, and still was handsome. Mr. Colman at the first glance again started, and again resorted to the friendly aid of his snuff box, fairly thrown off his balance. At length, turning round with something like an angry feeling, in despair of finding much rising talent for his purpose, he whispered, 'Fore gad, Mathews, yours is a superannuated company.'

On this occasion, Mr. Colman read the comedy of John Bull, which was on the point of being got up at York, Tate requesting as a favour that the author would give the performers the advantage of his instructions in their several characters, by reading the play in the green-room. This, indeed, proved a treat: those who were to act in the comedy, and those who were not, alike enjoyed it. It is for those only who have experienced the delight of

hearing Mr. Colman read his dramatic productions, to guess the pleasure with which his perfect representation of every character was listened to by the performers; proving that one of the best dramatists of his day might also have been one of the finest actors."

On Colman's return to London, he, in the following month, forwarded a *reminder* to Mathews.

"DEAR MATHEWS, April 30.

"I send you a hasty scrawl to put your mind at ease. I am most fully sensible that you are anxious to be just to all parties; therefore, do not permit any qualms of conscience on my account to embarrass you, while you are making your public bow to the good folks at York on the 7th of May. The sooner, however, you can be with me after that period, the better for our mutual interests. Write me a line by return of post, to say if I may hope to see you on the 10th. We can settle nothing relative to your *début* till we meet, and be assured that I will press nothing upon you that is repugnant to your feelings. Make my compliments to Mrs. Mathews. George sends his remembrances to you, and begs me to assure you, spite of your calumnies, that he has not been *drunk* above seven nights in the week since we parted from you at Tadcaster. Adieu. Rely on my being warmly interested in your success in London, and believe me sincerely yours,

G. COLMAN.

"P.S.—Don't take off Suett again till we meet."

On the 5th of March, 1803, the most popular of George Colman's plays, 'John Bull, or an Englishman's Fireside,' was produced at Covent Garden. The unbounded humour of Dennis Brulgruddery

and Dan, the honest energy of Job Thornberry, the pathos, moral efficacy, character, and contrast that pervaded this comedy, immediately caused it to become an universal favourite. It was acted most admirably, and had a great run—forty-seven nights!

On the 16th May, 1803, Colman opened with a new company, almost exclusively strangers to the London boards. The performances were, a Prelude, called 'No Prelude,' with the 'Jew,' and the 'Agreeable Surprise,' in which the inimitable Mathews made his first appearance before a London audience, and enacted Jabel in the comedy, and Lingo in the farce; and exhibited such talents as at once established him as a favourite with the town. Colman also engaged Elliston from Bath, to take the stage management, and the lead as an actor. The new and hazardous scheme was infinitely indebted for its success to Elliston's enterprising spirit, and the promptitude and versatility of his professional abilities. His performance of Octavian was greatly admired and followed; and the failure of 'The Iron Chest,' with Kemble in Sir Edward Mortimer at Drury Lane, and its success when Elliston played that character at the Haymarket, was a circumstance that did the young tragedian essential service. We never were of opinion that the condemnation of the Iron Chest was owing entirely to the bad acting of Mr. Kemble; but, however this may be, the play, which *died* on the third or fourth night at Drury Lane, was revived by the skill and animation of Mr. Elliston, and he enjoys all the fame of having restored it to life again.

It would appear that their Majesties took an interest in Colman's scheme of an independent company; for the performances of the first night were repeated on the second by Royal command; and, within a fortnight after, the royal visits to the theatre had been thrice repeated; though nine years had elapsed since the Haymarket had been so honoured. We suppose, however, that either the performers on the whole did not please the public, or such as were successful procured engagements in the winter theatres; for after that season the plan was abandoned, and the Haymarket manager again awaited the breaking up of the winter companies, from which to form his own.

Mrs. Goodall, the Floranthe of The Mountaineers when Kemble acted Octavian, returned this season to the Haymarket.

A farce from the pen of Allingham, entitled 'Mrs. Wiggins,' though it encountered a severe storm the first night, was afterwards successful, and convulsed the audience with laughter. The whole affair was on the shoulders of Mathews, and it was of infinite service to him with the public. Under the name of Arthur Griffinhoofe, the Manager produced a merry farce, called 'Love Laughs at Locksmiths,' adapted from a French piece, entitled *Une Folie*. It was well acted by Mathews, Elliston, Grove, &c.; and Mr. Boaden brought out a drama called 'The Maid of Bristol.'

Mathews was very anxious at this time that his friend Young should make his appearance in London, and endeavoured to negotiate an engagement for the

following season at the Haymarket, to which the subsequent note from Colman, alludes.

" My Dear Mathews, Dec. 23rd, 1803.

" If I were to disclaim my antipathy to pen, ink, and paper, nobody would believe me. Heaven help all Epistolaries, from St. Paul to the Corinthians down to Lord Chesterfield to his son. Could anything make me write, your very pleasant letter would goad me. But,

" This is no answer, thou unfeeling man !"

In short, I cannot answer you in less than a week, for your question relative to Mr. Young involves a point which circumstances will not permit me yet to explain. Beg Mr. Young to allow me a week or ten days to elapse before he concludes an engagement; at the end of which time, my dear Mathews, you shall hear from me most fully, and then, 'were I tedious as a Prince, I could find it in my heart to bestow it all on your worship.'

With regard, yours
Most sincerely,
G. Colman."

Mathews was still solicitous respecting an engagement for Young, which tardily produced another epistle from the Manager of the Little Theatre.

" Suffolk-street, Charing Cross, Jan. 9, 1804.

" My Dear Mathews,

" You have chosen a curious correspondent in me, to gratify your passion for letter reading. 'Tis like a drunkard inviting himself to a Mussulman's dinner, where there is no wine. I now write some days later than my promise. Indolence, however, has not swayed me in this instance ; I have been incapable of answering a main point in your letter

sooner. It is with much regret I answer it now, by saying I must, for the present at least, relinquish Mr. Young's offer of assistance. Elliston's engagement with me still extends to two seasons. This circumstance, and the limited scale of both business and expenses in the Haymarket (and since the receipt of your letter I have been looking minutely into expenses for next summer), form a bar to my wish of treating with him. Pray present my best thanks to him for his proposal, and if in the engagements he may immediately form he should keep the Haymarket in view, and not bind himself for a long time elsewhere, it may ultimately perhaps tend to our mutual advantage. You are by no means the only 'ghost', whose word I should take for a thousand pounds from whom I have heard of his merit.

"I begin a little to doubt the good taste of your Liverpool managers. I hear they brought you out in Pedrillo, a vile part surely, for the *début* of a man who is to make a splash. All actors call it an up-hill part, but I think it is up mountain. If, however, our 'Love and Locksmiths' pleased them, it is more than it did the good folks at Covent Garden. I did not see it, but I am told it was almost marred, except Emery's Solomon Lob, which they tell me was excellent. Almost all the rest was 'filthy dowlas;' even my friend Fawcett, I hear (excellent actor as he is), was not so happy as usual. They who had seen the piece at the Haymarket, attributed its want of effect to the bungling mode of getting it up, and we triumph most decidedly by the comparison.

"You ask me if I am writing. I am like the puppet-show man, 'just going to begin,' a comedy. Alas! alas! with my antipathy to pen and ink, what have I to endure, before I have the pleasure of meeting you! For my own sake, if not for yours, I shall endeavour at something which may please you, and be effective in your hands.

"Whenever you are at leisure (if it be not too impudent a request for a professed bad answerer), scribble a few lines

to me. I shall always be happy to hear from you. Any intelligence of your proceedings and welfare will be interesting, my dear Mathews, to yours, very truly,

G. COLMAN."

It does not appear that Colman produced any thing but an epilogue or two in this year. Elliston was the stage manager of the little theatre, and commenced that practice, for which he was afterwards so remarkable, the frequent and uncalled for appeals to the audience.

The following odd letter from Colman to S. J. Arnold deserves insertion :

" Tuesday Evening.

" ' If you will buckle *ruin* on your back,' e'en take the song, altered as I send it to you.

" I do not care two pence, on my own account, whether it is hissed or no, but I should be very sorry if I brought a clamour upon your piece. Remember! you volunteer—you solicit the peril. *I only beg that the song may now be sung as I have altered it, or* NOT AT ALL; *and that it may be printed in the books, sold in the lobby, as* IT IS SUNG. This is my only, but decided stipulation. From the very bottom of my soul, I wish you every support and success that your fondest hopes can cherish.

Truly yours,

G. C."

" P.S.—This will be with you by eleven, at latest, to-morrow. I could not transmit it to you sooner. Mathews is quick, and I doubt not will be perfect.

" To Samuel Arnold, Esq.

(" If Mr. Arnold should not be at the theatre, Mr. Elliston is requested to open this letter.")

This enclosed a song intended to be comic, to be studied and sung on the same or following evening by Mathews. It was studied, though very imperfectly sung, and *was* most outrageously hissed. It described a traveller with *carrotty locks*, who popping his head out early in the morning on the gallery of a London inn to call the chambermaid, so frightened her by the sight of his red head, that she screamed out ' Fire, fire !' and alarmed all the sleeping inmates, who rushed out in their shirts to ascertain the extent of the danger.

Elliston took his benefit this year at the Opera House. The performances were Pizarro, and Love Laughs at Locksmiths. Upon this occasion the public broke in, many hundreds not paying at all, though a collection took place after they were in the pit.

Colman now disposed of part of the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, to his brother-in-law, Mr. Morris, Mr. Winston, and an attorney of the name of Tahourdine. The play-going public had this year to lament the loss of Suett the comedian, who died at the age of 47. The summer season of 1805 was remarkable for a personal fracas between Mathews and Elliston, on the latter accusing Mathews of not having done his best in a character in a new comedy, written by Cherry, entitled The Village, or the World's Epitome. Mathews retorted, that all concerned had done their duty equally well with Mr. Elliston, and some even better. Elliston gave the disagreeable negative to this, which is never mentioned to ears polite, and received from Mathews a

staggering blow. After some time, a reconciliation took place between them, through the mediation of Warner Phipps, Esq. and Sir John Carr.

This fracas had scarcely blown over, when Dowton announced for his benefit Foote's Tailors, or a Tragedy for Warm Weather! This announcement created a sensation amongst the operatives of the thimble, and letters were poured in, threatening destruction to the theatre. As soon as Dowton presented himself as Francisco, a large pair of shears was thrown at him. He immediately offered twenty pounds reward for the apprehension of the offender, but the assembled tailors were firm, and the riot commenced. A mob assembled in front of the theatre, and Mr. Aaron Graham, principal magistrate of the Bow Street office, was sent for. He soon arrived with the police, but finding that his force was not strong enough, he dispatched a message to the officer of the Horse Guards. The dragoons immediately arrived and cleared the crowd, which had by this time considerably increased. Mr. Graham took sixteen agitating tailors in the theatre into custody, who were held to bail in fifty pounds each, with two sureties in forty pounds.

Thus ended this tragedy, from which we turn with pleasure to the acmé of the comic, for Liston—*the* Liston—made his first appearance on the 15th of June, 1805, in the character of Sheepface, in the Village Lawyer.

The season of 1806 tended to increase the popularity of Elliston, Mathews, and Liston, and it was always a pleasing circumstance to the public, when

the period of the year arrived that the doors of the little theatre in the Haymarket were thrown open. Mathews had given, for the first time in public, on his benefit night, some specimens of his powers of ventriloquy. By the following letter from Colman, it is evident that it was a successful and attractive effort.

"My Dear Mathews, August 26th, 1806.

"I am dreadfully gravelled on this conclusion of the season for want of new matter; and as it is occasioned in some measure from the dulness of my own muse (which has shirked me in my efforts to finish my farce), I feel that I owe the more to my partners to do all that can be done during the remainder of our term. Will you, under these circumstances, repeat your ventriloquy on Saturday? As I am thrown out of the intended play, it will be of service.

"Truly yours,

G. Colman."

Colman produced this year his pleasant farce, entitled 'We Fly by Night.'

The following trait of Jack Bannister in 1807, which redounds highly to the credit and character of the latter, is recorded by Colman:

"After having slaved at some dramatic composition, I forget what, I had resolved to pass one entire week in luxurious sloth. I was then so disgusted with pen, ink, and paper, that had I been an absolute monarch, with cruelty equal to my despotism, I would have made it felony for any subject who presented a petition to me written with, or upon, any stationer's ware whatsoever.

"At this crisis, just as I was beginning the first

morning's sacrifice upon the altar of my darling goddess, indolence, enter Jack Bannister with a huge manuscript under his left arm! This he told me, consisted of loose materials for an entertainment with which he meant to 'skir the country,' under the title of 'Bannister's Budget;' but unless I reduced the chaos into some order for him, and that instantly, he should lose his tide, and with it his emoluments for the season. In such a case, there was no balancing between two alternatives, so I deserted my darling goddess to drudge through the week for my old companion. To concoct the crudities he had brought me by polishing, expunging, adding, in short almost rewriting them, was, it must be confessed, labouring under the 'horrors of digestion;' but the toil was completed at the week's end, and away went Jack Bannister into the country with his Budget.

"Several months afterwards, he returned to town, and I inquired, of course, what success? so great he answered, that, in consequence of the gain which had accrued to him through my means, and which he was certain would still accrue, as he now conconsidered 'The Budget' to be an annual income for some years to come, he must insist upon cancelling a bond which I had given him for money he had lent to me. I was astounded, for I had never dreamed of fee or reward. To prove that he was in earnest, I extract a paragraph from a letter which he wrote from Shrewsbury to me:—

"'For fear of accidents, I think it necessary to inform you

that Fladgate, your attorney, is in possession of your bond to me of £.700. As I consider it fully discharged, it is proper you should have this acknowledgment under my hand.

J. B.'

" Should my unostentatious friend think me indelicate in publishing this anecdote, I can only say, that it naturally appertains to the sketch I have given of our co-operations in life; and that the insertion of it here seems almost indispensable, in order to elucidate my previous statement of our having blended so much sentiment with so much traffic. I feel too, that it would be downright injustice to him if I suppressed it; and would betoken in myself, the pride of those narrow-minded persons who are ashamed of acknowledging how greatly they have profited by the liberal spirit of others.

" The bond above mentioned was given, be it observed, on a private account; not for money due to an actor for his professional assistance. Gilliland, in his ' Dramatic Mirror,' says, that my admission of partners ' enabled the proprietors to completely liquidate all the demands which had for some time past involved the house in temporary embarrassments.' This is a gross mistake, the Haymarket theatre was never embarrassed, on the contrary, it was a prosperous speculation, while under my direction. My own difficulties during part of this time are another matter.

" In ' The Budget,' I have so much altered some of the songs, that they might almost be called my own. I do not arrogate to myself the merit of

having improved them so much as Sir John Cutler mended his worsted stockings, till he darned them into silk; and if I plead guilty of having had a hand in the texture, let the primary manufacturers remember, that I have left enough of their own stuff to convict them as partakers of the crime."

The Summer Season of 1807 commenced on the 15th of June. During the interval the Haymarket theatre had been newly decorated, and the pit enlarged by taking away some unnecessary space before the proscenium. Colman was fortunate this year in the engagement of Mr. Charles Young from Manchester, who proved himself for many succeeding years an actor of sterling merit, a perfect gentleman in his manners, and a most delightful companion in private life; Mr. Young was indeed an honour to his profession. He played during the short summer campaign, the parts of Hamlet, Don Felix, Osmond, Sir Edward Mortimer, Rolla, Hotspur, Petruchio, Gondibert, The Stranger, Harry Dornton, besides new characters in some ephemeral dramas.

Mrs. Litchfield was also added to Colman's company, and from her capability of sustaining a variety of parts, was of essential service to him. We also find the names of Fawcett, Mathews, Liston, De Camp, Chapman, Taylor, Mrs. Grove, Noble, Palmer, Junr. Waddy, Bennet (a Bath singer), &c. Mrs. Gibbs, Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Mathews, Mrs. Liston, Mrs. Powell, in this excellent summer theatre.

Mr. Theodore Hook produced this season two successful pieces, 'The Fortress,' and 'Music Mad,' in both of which he was aided by the compositions of his father.

The revival of the Critic was very attractive this year; the characters of Puff, Fawcett; Sir Fretful Plagiary, Mathews; Don Ferolo, Liston; and Tilburina, Mrs. Liston—all admirably sustained.

The care and skill of Mathews in his representation of Sir Fretful, was of infinite service to his name as an actor. Leigh Hunt was so struck with the performance, that he spoke of it thus—"We are generally satisfied when an actor can express a single feeling with strength of countenance; but to express two at once, and to give them at the same time a powerful distinctness, belongs to the perfection of his art. Nothing can be more admirable than the look of Mr. Mathews, when the severe criticism is detailed by his malicious acquaintance. While he affects a pleasantry of countenance, he cannot help betraying his rage in his eyes, in that feature which always displays our most predominant feelings; if he draws the air to and fro through his teeth, as if he was perfectly assured of his own pleasant feelings, he convinces every body by his tremulous and restless limbs that he is in absolute torture; if the lower part of his face expands into a painful smile, the upper part contracts into a glaring frown which contradicts the ineffectual good humour beneath; every thing in his face becomes rigid, confused, and uneasy; it

is a mixture of oil and vinegar, in which the acid predominates; it is anger putting on a mask that is only the more hideous in proportion as it is more fantastic. The sudden drop of his smile into a deep and bitter indignation, when he can endure sarcasm no longer, completes this impassioned picture of Sir Fretful: but lest his indignation should swell into mere tragedy, Mr. Mathews accompanies it with all the touches of familiar vexation: while he is venting his rage in vehement expressions, he accompanies his more emphatic words with a closing thrust of his buttons, which he fastens and unfastens up and down his coat; and when his obnoxious friend approaches his snuff-box to take a pinch, he claps down the lid and turns violently off with a most malicious mockery of grin. These are the performances and the characters, which are the true fame of actors and dramatists. If our farcical performers and farcical writers could reach this refined satire, ridicule would vanish before them, like breath from a polished knife.*"

In the beginning of the year 1808, Colman commenced a paper war with Mrs. Inchbald, who at the period had undertaken to edit a series of plays, under the title of the British Theatre. Colman had been nettled by the criticism of this lady on 'The Heir at Law,' and prefixed to a new edition of his comedy the following letter:

* Critical Essays on the Performers of 'The London Theatres,' by Leigh Hunt, 1807.

To Mrs. Inchbald.

" Madam,

" When I lately sold the copyright of the Heir at Law, with two or three other dramatic manuscripts, I required permission to publish any prefatory matter, which might appear eligible to me, in the first genuine impression of the plays in question. I had reason to suppose that they would be put forth in a series of dramas, with ' Critical Remarks' by Mrs. Inchbald. On this account I more particularly urged my *postulatum*. I make no apology for writing Latin to you, madam, for as a scholiast, you doubtless understand it, like the learned Madame Dacier, your predecessor.

" Did not the opportunity thus occur of addressing you, did it not absolutely fall in my way, I should have been silent, but as your critique on the present play will probably go hand in hand with this letter, I would say a little relative to those dramas of mine which have already had the honour to be somewhat singed in passing the fiery ordeal of feminine fingers; fingers which it grieves me to see destined to a rough task, from which your manly contemporaries in the drama would naturally shrink.

" Achilles, when he went into petticoats, must have made an awkward figure among the females; but the delicate Deidamia never wielded a battle-axe to slay and maim the gentlemen.

" My writings (if they deserve the name) are replete with error; but, dear madam, why would you not apply to me? I should have been as zealous to save you trouble as a beau to pick up your fan. I could have easily pointed to twenty of my blots, in the right places, which have escaped you in the labour of discovering one in the wrong.

" But, madam, I tire you. A word or two first for my late father; then for myself, and I have done. In your criticism

upon the Jealous Wife, a sterling comedy, which must live on the English stage till taste and morality expire, you say, that after this play, 'it appears Mr. Colman's talents for dramatic writing failed, or at least his ardour abated.' Fye on these bitters, madam, which you sprinkle with honey! Whether his talent did or did not fail, I presume to say not, is no point in question, but you have gone out of the way to assert it; mixing *ad libitum*, the biographer with the critic. Oh! madam! is this grateful? is it graceful from an ingenious lady, who was originally encouraged, and brought forward, as an authoress, by that very man on whose tomb she idly plants this poisonous weed of remark, to choke the laurels which justly grace his memory.

"As to the history of my father's writing the Clandestine Marriage, jointly with Mr. Garrick; it is a pity, since you choose to enter into it, that you had not proceeded to all the inquiry within your reach, instead of trusting to vague report or your own conjecture. I should have been gratified, madam, in giving you every information on that subject, which I have received from my father's lips; and you have no reason, I trust, to suspect that I should desert from his known veracity.

"How happened, madam, this omission of your duty to your publishers and the public?

"As to my own trifling plays, which you have done me the honour to notice, allow me merely to ask a few questions:—

"Inkle and Yarico.—Pray, madam, why is it an 'important fault' to bring Yarico from America instead of Africa; when Ligon (whence the story in the Spectator is taken) records the circumstance as a fact.* Pray, madam, why

* Yarico is not a solitary evidence to clear me from this 'important fault' of resorting to the main of America for a slave. 'As for the Indians, we have but few, and those fetched from

did you not rather observe that it is a worse fault (excusable only in the carelessness of youth) to put lions and tigers in the woods of America, and to give Wowski a Polish denomination?

"Mountaineers.—Pray, madam, why should you kill the Mountaineers with Mr. Kemble? Pray, madam, has not Octavian been acted repeatedly (though certainly never so excellently as by Mr. Kemble), to very full houses without him? Pray, madam, did you ever ask the treasurer of the Haymarket theatre this question?

"Poor Gentleman.—Pray, madam, do you mean a compliment, or rebuke, when you say this comedy exacts rigid criticism? 'not from its want of ingenuity or powers of amusement, but that both these requisites fall infinitely here below the talents of the author.' Pray, do not the subjects which present themselves to all authors, make all authors sometimes appear unequal? and when you, madam, as an author, have shown ingenuity, and powers of amusement to 'auditors and readers,' have they not been content too?

"John Bull.—You have taken him only by the tip of his horns, madam, but if Irish bog-trotters and Yorkshire clowns were (according to your prescription) to talk like gentlemen, pray, madam, might not a lady invite them very innocently some afternoon to a ball and supper?

"You really clothe your 'Remarks,' madam, in very smooth language. Permit me to take my leave in a quotation from them, with some little alteration.

"'Beauty, with all its charms, will not constitute a good

other countries, some from the neighbouring islands, some from the main, which we make slaves, &c."—*Ligon's History of Barbadoes.*

After this, it would be well for Mrs. Inchbald to reflect that it may sometimes be necessary for a critic on one book to have read another. G. C.

remarker. A very inferior dramatic critique may be in the highest degree pointed.'

I have the honour to be, Madam,
(with due limitation,)
Your admirer, and obedient Servant,
GEORGE COLMAN, the younger."

"January 1808."

Mrs. Inchbald's reply to the above letter was so admirably and modestly written, with such an arch vein of satire pervading it, that it must be confessed Colman got the worst of the argument.

To George Colman the Younger.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"As I have offended you, I take it kind that you have publicly told me so, because it gives me an opportunity thus openly to avow my regret, and at the same time to offer you all the atonement which is now in my power.

"In one of those unfortunate moments which leaves us years of repentance, I accepted an overture to write from two to four pages in the manner of preface, to be introduced before a certain number of plays, for the perusal or information of such persons as have not access to any diffuse compositions, either in biography or criticism, but who are yet very liberal contributors to the treasury of a theatre. Even for so humble a task I did not conceive myself competent, till I submitted my own opinion to that of the proprietors of the plays in question.

"To you, as an author, I have no occasion to describe the force of those commendations which come from the lips of our best patrons, the purchasers of our labour. Dr. Johnson has declared 'An author is always sure to hear truth froma bookseller, at least as far as his judgment goes; there

is no flattery.' The judgment on which I placed my reliance on this occasion was, that many readers might be amused and informed, whilst no one dramatist could possibly be offended by the cursory remarks of a female observer, upon works which had gone through various editions, had received the unanimous applause of every British theatre, and the final approbation or censure of all our learned Reviews; and that any injudicious critique of such female might involve her own reputation (as far as a woman's reputation depends on being a critic), but could not depreciate the worth of the writings upon which she gave her brief intelligence and random comments.

"One of the points of my agreement was, that I should have no control over the time or the order in which these prefaces were to be printed or published, but that I should merely produce them as they were called for, and resign all other interference to the proprietor or editor of the work. You ask me, 'Do not the subjects which present themselves to all authors, make all authors sometimes appear unequal?' I answer yes, and add, that here, in the capacity of a periodical writer, I claim indulgence upon this your interrogation, far more than you. Confined to a stated time of publication, such writers may be compelled occasionally to write in haste, in ill health, under depressed spirits, with thoughts alienated by various cares, or revolting from the subject before them. The remarks on The Mountaineers were written beneath the weight of almost all those misfortunes combined. The play was sent to the press, whilst not a sentence could my fancy suggest, which my judgment approved, to send after it. In this perplexity, recollection came to my aid, and I called to mind, and borrowed, in my necessity, your own reported words to Mr. Kemble, upon the representation of this identical drama. As I speak only of report, should your memory supply no evidence in proof of what I advance, ask yourself whether it was not probable, that on some occasion during a season

of more than hoped-for success, such acknowledgments, or nearly such, as I have intimated, might not have escaped you, towards the evident promoter of your good fortune? or if at any period of a later date, you can bring it to your remembrance the having lavished unwary compliments even on minor actors, and upon minor events, do not once doubt but that you actually declared your sentiments, to the original performer of Octavian, in eulogiums even more fervid than those which I took the liberty to repeat.

" The admiration I have for Inkle and Yarico, rendered my task here much lighter. Yet that very admiration warned me against unqualified praise, as the mere substitute for ridicule; and to beware lest suspicions of a hired panegyrist should bring disgrace upon that production which required no such nefarious help for its support. Guided by cautions such as these, I deemed it requisite to discover one fault in this excellent opera. You charge me with having invented that one which never existed, and of passing over others which blemish the work. Yet you give me no credit for this tenderness; though believe me, my dear Sir, had I exposed any faults but such as you could easily argue away, (and this in my preface, I acknowledged would be the case,)* you would have been too much offended to have addressed the present letter to me; your anger would not have been united with pleasantry, nor should I have possessed that consciousness which I now enjoy, of never having intended to give you a moment's displeasure.

" Humility, and not vanity, I know to be the cause of that sensation which my slight animadversions have excited; but this is cherishing a degree of self-contempt which I may be pardoned for never having supposed, that any of my 'manly contemporaries in the drama' could have indulged.

* See preface to Inkle and Yarico.

" Of your respected father I have said nothing that he would not approve were he living. He had too high an opinion of his own talents, to have repined under criticisms such as mine; and too much respect for other pursuits, to have blushed at being cloyed with the drama; yet you did me justice when you imagined that the mere supposition of my ingratitude to him would give me pain. This was the design meditated in your accusation; for, had I either wronged or slighted his memory, you would have spared your reproach, and not have aimed it at a heart too callous to have received the impression. But in thus acknowledging my obligations to Mr. Colman the elder, let it be understood that they amounted to no more than those usual attentions which every manager of a theatre is supposed to confer, when he first selects a novice in dramatic writing as worthy of being introduced on his stage to the public.

" I should thank you for reminding me of my duty to my employers, but that it has been the object of my care, even to the most anxious desire of minutely fulfilling the contract between us; in which, as you were not a party consulted, you cannot tell but that I might stipulate to give no other information in those prefaces, but such as was furnished me from their extensive repository of recorded facts.

" Nor did the time or space allotted me for both observations and biography (for biography of the deceased was part of my duty, and not introduced at my discretion), admit of any farther than an abridgment, or slight sketch of each.

" Your attention and wishes of having been applied to on this subject, however, give a value to these trifles, I never set on them before. The novelty of the attempt was their only hoped-for recommendation. The learned had for ages written criticism—the illiterate were now to make a trial—and this is the era of dramatic prodigies? Adventurers, sufficiently modest, can be easily enticed into

that field of speculation where singularity may procure wealth, and incapacity obtain fame.

"Permit me, notwithstanding this acquiescence in your contempt for my literary acquirements, to apprize you, that in comparing me as a critic with Madame Dacier, you have inadvertently placed yourself as an author, in the rank with Homer. I might as well aspire to write remarks on 'The Iliad,' as Dacier condescend to give comments on 'The Mountaineers.' Be that as it may, I willingly subscribe myself an unlettered woman, and as willingly yield to you all those scholastic honours which you have so excellently described in the following play.*

I am, dear Sir,

(With too much pride at having been admitted a dramatist along with the two Colmans, father and son, to wish to diminish the reputation of either)

Yours most truly and sincerely,

March, 1808. ELIZABETH INCHBALD."

* The Heir at Law.—Vide Dr. Pangloss.—ED.

CHAPTER XI.

1808–1815.

Haymarket Affairs—Plot and Counter-Plot—The Africans—Liston—Yes or No—Isaac Pocock—George Keate, F.S.A.—Effect of Fright—Tragi-Comedy—Colman's strict sense of Honor in the Rules of the Bench—D. E. Morris—Liston in Octavian—Major Downs—Colman's *Jeu d'Esprit*—Mrs. Gibbs—Sowerby—Theatrical Disputes—Quadrupeds of Quedlinburgh—Darkness Visible—Travellers Benighted—Mathews—Colman at Carlton House—Chancery—Poetical Vagaries—Debut of Terry—The Sleep-Walker—Look at Home—Accident to Mathews and Terry—Harlequin Hocus-Pocus—Love and Gout—Masquerade Prologue by Colman.

The Haymarket Theatre opened June 15th, 1808, with many alterations in the company, some of which were not considered to be for the better; Young, however, was the leading tragedian, and Fawcett, Mathews, and Liston the comic props. The first novelty in the best style and spirit of farce, was 'Plot and Counter-Plot,' translated from the French by Mr. Charles Kemble. A revival of Lillo's Fatal Curiosity followed, for the purpose of introducing Young as Old Wilmot; but as it was not tragedy weather, the audience showed very little favour at the dropping of the curtain. The piece from which the management expected the greatest success, was the 'Africans, or War, Love, and Duty.' It was the production of Mr. Colman, and certainly is far from being his best drama. He bestowed his chief labour

upon the dialogue, which is highly ornamented, and in the most vigorous style of the author; but this labour was misapplied, for the characters required the utmost simplicity of diction. This was one of the great faults of the play. There are always sufficient opportunities for a writer like Mr. Colman to show that he is a poet, but when the object is to reach the heart, he should not travel to it by a circuitous route. The Three Brothers were well represented by Young, Farley, and Fawcett; the latter played admirably, and was, doubtlessly, the great support of the piece. Henry Augustus Mug (Liston) was dragged into the play. There are boundaries even to extravagance, and when Colman planned the introduction of a vulgar cockney into Tatteconda, and made him secretary of state, he must have been astonished at his own temerity; Liston, however, was *himself alone,* his humour never failed, and the song which he had to sing to the tune of 'Will you come to the bower,' he had frequently to warble thrice.

The partial success of the Africans precluded the production of other novelties during the season, a new farce excepted, called 'First come, first served;' which was brought out for Mathews's benefit, and was attributed to Sir John Carr: and on the 31st of August, a pleasant trifle, called 'Yes, or No!' a farce by Isaac Pocock, afterwards the very successful author of 'Hit or Miss,' and of many dramatic adaptations of Sir Walter Scott's novels to the stage. 'Yes, or No!' was excellently acted by Liston, Mathews, Farley, Mrs. Davenport, and Mrs. Liston.

The subjoined letter was addressed by Colman to Mathews, with whom he had promised to dine.

" Dear Mathews, November 11, 1808.

" I 'gin to pull in resolution."

" When I talked of Sunday holidays, I felt bolder than upon reflection I ought to do, with a due respect to the regulations of our college,* into which I have enquired more particularly, since we met. So another day, in the course of the month, I will, if you please, attend you, and be kind enough to look out a moon for me, for I incline to the party of the Lunatics, and am no follower of the prince of darkness on the king's highway.

" So, Sheridan and Hood for ever! No Paull! God save the King! Bless the crier! Huzza, Huzza!

G. Colman."

The following ludicrous anecdote of Mr. George Keate, a friend of his father, is related by Colman. Mr. Keate, whom we have previously mentioned, was the editor of an interesting account of the wreck of the Antelope on the Pellew Islands, and of Prince Lee-Boo, who was brought thence into this country, where he died. " Mr. Keate's countenance," says Colman, " was more grotesquely ugly than the generality of human faces; for some time, I wondered what freak of Nature could have made it so, till I heard him tell my father that Nature's frolic had been materially seconded by accident: he had been at a play, in a side box of one of the London theatres, when there

* By the college, Colman meant the King's Bench Prison, in the rules of which he then and for many after years resided.

was a cry of ' fire,' ' I was excessively frightened,' said Mr. Keate; ' so much so, indeed, that when I had got home, and, thanks to Providence, had escaped, though the alarm was a false one, I found that my eye-brows and eye-lashes had dropped off, through apprehension; and they never, as you may perceive, Sir, have grown again.' I have heard much of the effects of fear, such as the hair standing on end, and even turning grey on the sudden, but of its causing eye-brows and eye-lashes instantly to vanish, in the side box of a theatre, unless they were false ones, and shaken off in a squeeze to get out, I never before or since met with an example. The gravity with which Mr. Keate told this story, and the ruefulness of his bald wooden visage gave me much pain, from the difficulty of suppressing a vulgar and uproarious horse laugh.

" Having finished his history, he began a subject much more doleful, by pulling from his pocket a manuscript play of his own writing, and asking my father (Oh horror!) to let him read it to him: the proposition was waived; but the author expressed his doubts whether he should announce his work as a production of pleasantry or woe, for it partook of both. Mr. Keate was F.R.S. and S.A.

" My father related, that a certain Lord B——, of former times, had finished a play, and, as it was upon a mixed story, he consulted his father, who was primate of Ireland, whether he should call it a tragedy or comedy; ' Murra, murra!' said the primate, ' call it a tragedy, for it is a dismal piece!' In this tragedy there were the following lines:

" And so, without any more ifs or ands,
He jump'd from off the cliffs upon the sands;"

which the author generously expressed, in a note, his willingness to alter, if required, into

" And so, without any more ands or ifs,
He jump'd from off the sands upon the cliffs!"

In this work was, also, extant

" So when a huntsman goeth out to hawk,
He finds two filberts growing on one stalk;
He cracks the one, and finding it unsound,
Concludes the other so, though lying on the ground;
So Amaryllis, born of mother chaste,
She to be pure must hold her honour fast."

N.B.—In the same play, the king having ordered a slave's ears to be cut off, the slave roars, and the attendant tells the king that the sufferer is

" In great grief and pain;"

upon which the king, touched with compassion, cries out,

" Give him, Oh! give him, both his ears again!"

When Colman was in the rules (and Dubois said that he only staid there to prove by a practical joke, that he could be kept within them), he lived in the last house of the rules towards Westminster, which however he left suddenly, and gave this reason for his departure. The staircase had a window looking out of the rules, and he said " that after one of his nightly symposiums, he was afraid in going to bed, he might fall out of this window, and so fix his bail." Honour, therefore, made him retreat: all retreats are not of that character.

An old acquaintance of Colman, related a whimsical anecdote respecting the rivalry of David

Morris, Colman's brother-in-law. Colman has recorded of himself, that he affected at one period, in dress, that which we degenerate moderns have designated the dandy-cut, the exquisite, but then known as the Macaroni style. Whenever Colman mounted a new suit, Morris, who was a dashing young man, went to his tailor, and had one made exactly like it; he had his hair, too, dressed, precisely in Colman's fashion. So closely did Morris think it necessary to look like Colman, that, however absurd it may now appear, Colman, on going to the Haymarket theatre one day, accidentally trod on a loose stone on the pavement and splashed himself with muddy water all up his leg. Morris was not to be outdone, and before he entered the theatre, he went and dirtied his silk stocking exactly in the same manner.

Liston undertook, in May 1809, to perform Octavian in the 'Mountaineers,' for his benefit, the Covent Garden company being then at the Haymarket theatre. He acted the part seriously and sensibly; but the audience, from being accustomed to roar with laughter at his comedy, were puzzled what to make of it. Mrs. H. Johnston was the Floranthe, and without any ill compliment to Mr. Liston, her efforts to suppress her feeling of the ludicrous must have been awful. The audience were much more at ease with the remainder of the evening's entertainments, consisting of Dr. Last's Examination, Blue Devils, and Tom Thumb, in which Liston personated Dr. Last, James, and Lord Grizzle admirably. Colman wrote

an address for the occasion, which Liston also delivered.

The annexed invitation was sent by Colman to William Augustus Downs, better known at the period, as "Fat Major Downs," of the St. James's Royal Volunteers, a fellow of infinite humour, though professing the grave trade of an undertaker. It is dated December 3, 1809, "to W. A. Downs, Esq."

"Boisterous Sir!

"(In all whom the fleet was moor'd, as the Poet sings.)

"What effect had the heavy gale of wind upon you, one night, in the course of this last week? I apprehend that it occasioned a tremendous swell in you, and that you must have run very high. It is with painful anxiety that I wait for a detail of the damages done to the shipping, which lay at anchor in you, in such tempestuous weather.

Your name brings to mind, dear funereal Downs,
Both your coffins, and one of our maritime towns.
Renowned Undertaker! all mortals must feel.
That we can't mention Downs, without thinking on Deal.
Derry Downs, Downs, Downs, derry Downs!

"Will you dine with me to-morrow at five, to meet the great Liston and his little wife; and will you also *undertake* to forward the enclosed to the Cambridge Coffee House, for I know not where it is? I am *obliged* to send an apology to Grubb.

Walter Raleigh."

"Send a goose—*i. e. (latinè)* an *Anser*."

Downs was the original "Two Single Gentlemen rolled into One," the actual "Will Waddle" of Colman's capital song.

Whilst narrating the life of George Colman the

younger, we must not omit to speak of the present Mrs. Colman, formerly Mrs. Gibbs, whose gentle manners, and highly informed mind render her conversation both instructive and agreeable. This charming actress made her first appearance on the stage when very young, at the Haymarket Theatre in 1783, as Sally in the elder Colman's farce of 'Man and Wife,' being introduced there by her godfather, Mr. John Palmer. She was very beautiful, and was most favourably received. Her maiden name was Logan. When Palmer opened the Royalty Theatre in 1787, she again appeared before the public in the character of 'Miss in her Teens.' Her interesting figure, her fascinating countenance, and brilliant eyes, made an immediate impression on the audience. The great theatrical powers, however,

> 'The Haymarket, Covent Garden, and Old Drury,
> Issued their edicts full of sound and fury,'

against this eastern edifice; and Palmer was compelled to adopt the entertainments of a minor theatre. Mrs. Gibbs still continued with him, performing in pantomime, and speaking occasional addresses. The first pantomime produced at the Royalty was called 'Hobson's Choice; or, Thespis in Distress,' in which Mrs. Gibbs personated Thalia. On Mr. Palmer's return to Drury Lane, she performed at some of the most respectable provincial theatres.

Soon after the younger Colman undertook the management of the Haymarket Theatre, in consequence of his father's illness, Mrs. Gibbs was engaged

as a substitute for Mrs. Stephen Kemble, who had seceded. Though not possessing the vocal abilities of her predecessor, she excited universal approbation in rustic and simple characters. Having accepted an engagement at Drury Lane Theatre, Mrs. Gibbs acquired further fame during the winter season; but not satisfied, it seems, with this situation, she very soon exchanged it for a better at Covent Garden Theatre, where she remained till the period of her retirement from the stage.

Mrs. Gibbs has had the great advantage of appearing in characters written expressly for her. The artless innocence of Mary, in John Bull, she pourtrayed with great effect. Cicely Homespun, in the Heir at Law, she also performed with deserved approbation. She has been equally successful in the volatile, as in the simple class of character. Her personation of the hoydens in Ways and Means, and the Road to Ruin, was admirable. In serious characters, she moreover appeared with advantage; Yarico, particularly in Marguerite in Travellers Benighted; but she acted Wowski at the Haymarket Theatre, when her beautiful sister, Mrs. Carey (now Mrs. Harris), made her first appearance on the stage as Yarico. Latterly, however, the bustling chambermaids seemed to be her peculiar *forte*. In these parts she proved herself the legitimate successor of Mrs. Mattocks, and never failed to excite universal laughter. Her performance in Mrs. Cowley's Bold Stroke for a Husband, restored to the public a comedy which had long remained on the shelf. No one who had witnessed her deli-

neation of Tilburina in the Critic, would ever forget it. She also shone in some fashionable characters; Lady Contest in the Wedding Day, and Lady Elizabeth Freelove, in the Day after the Wedding. With such an actress in his theatre, and with such an honest, affectionate, and excellent hearted woman at home, George Colman could not be otherwise than happy. Mrs. Gibbs was ever cheerful; and in any kind or charitable actions in the theatre, or elsewhere, she was always liberal and unostentatious.

The summer company of 1809 at the Haymarket, contained among others Young, Mathews, Liston, and Jones. On the 26th June, a farce from the pen of Theodore Hook, entitled 'Killing no Murder,' was refused to be licensed by the Examiner, the cause of which is stated in the preface to the piece as published. It was, however, produced on the 1st July, with alterations, and was so successful that its performances extended to thirty-five nights. On the 10th of July, 'The Foundling of the Forest,' by Mr. Dimond, was represented, and was acted twenty-five nights; and Eyre, the actor, brought out a two-act drama, called 'The Vintagers,' with moderate success. The season, on the whole, was prosperous.

Unfortunately, a disagreement of long standing between the partners of the Haymarket theatre, now rose to a serious height. Winston sided with Mr. Colman; and Mr. Morris fought against both. It ended in awful litigation.

The annexed advertisement appeared in the newspapers of the day.

"THEATRE ROYAL HAYMARKET.

"As Joint-Proprietor and Treasurer, Mr. Morris thinks it right to apprise all Persons engaged at this Theatre for the year 1809 (except Mr. and Mrs. Liston), that such engagement terminated on the 15th of September last.

"29th January, 1810."

In 1810, Colman was enabled to avail himself of the services of his old friend Jack Bannister, who played all his favourite parts with unabated vigour; and in addition to Mathews, Liston, and Jones, Charles Kemble made his first appearance at the Haymarket theatre (after eight years absence) as Don Felix in the Wonder.

'The Doubtful Son; or, Secrets of a Palace,' a serious drama, which was produced and performed nineteen nights, introduced Mr. Sowerby (of eccentric notoriety), from the Theatre Royal, Bath. 'Bombastes Furioso,' written by Mr. Rhodes, made full amends for any failure. Liston's General Bombastes, Mathews's Artaxominous, and Taylor's Fusbos, must be imprinted in the recollections of all lovers of broad fun. With this the season wound up merrily.

On May 15th, 1811, the plan of the independent Company was revived. Elliston, who declined acting at the Lyceum, with the Drury Lane Company under Mr. Arnold's management, was engaged for the season. Several new actors were brought to London, the best of whom was Cooper, another Richard Jones came from Edinburgh, Barnes from York, a sterling actor, who did not remain long

enough before the Haymarket audience to be fully appreciated; and Miss Bellchambers, a very handsome *débutante*, were, in addition to others, added to the *corps dramatique*. At the close of the Winter theatres, Liston, Munden, and Jones, rejoined the Haymarket Company.

A new comic piece, called 'Trial by Jury,' was produced May 25, with tolerable success. On June 10th, Mr. Dimond brought out a three-act Play, entitled 'The Royal Oak,' founded on the fortunes of Charles the Second; this was succeeded by a piece called 'The Round Robin,' written and composed by the elder Dibdin, which was speedily condemned. A farce called 'The Outside Passenger,' travelled for a few nights only. This was followed by an extravaganza, entitled 'The Quadrupeds of Quedlinburgh, or the Rovers of Weimar,' announced in the bills as having been long in preparation, every effort having been strained by the management to *surpass* NATURE. On the evening of July 22, 1811, however, one of the proprietors contrived to frustrate the performances. The heading of the play bill for the above mentioned and several subsequent evenings (a theatrical curiosity) ran as follows:

"THEATRE ROYAL HAYMARKET.

"Messrs. Colman and Winston, from a sense of respect and duty to the public, and in justification of themselves, are under the necessity of giving a short detail of circumstances, which have occasioned the new piece (intended for representation this evening) to be withdrawn, and three of the most principal performers to withhold the further assistance of their talents from the Theatre.

"On a motion brought forward in the High Court of Chancery, on Saturday last, it was deemed proper by the Lord Chancellor to order that Mr. Morris, the Treasurer (who is one of the Proprietors) should be obliged by his partners to pay the salaries of certain performers with whom Messrs. Colman and Winston had entered into engagements. This matter will undergo much future question in a Court of Equity; but in the present stage of the business, Mr. Morris refuses to pay Messrs. Elliston, Jones, and Munden the emolument for which they have agreed to perform; and they have consequently retired from exertion without profit, giving the Managers all the timely notice in their power of their intentions, that their conduct may not be misconstrued into any disrespect to the town: Messrs. Colman and Winston have only to lament that they are (for a time at least) thus restrained from procuring those novelties, and that number of prominent performers, which may merit the patronage of an English metropolis."

The bills on the 25th of July, had the following advertisement:

"RETURN OF MESSRS. ELLISTON, JONES, AND MUNDEN.

"Messrs. Colman and Winston most grateful for past patronage, and solicitous to deserve its continuance by every effort in their power, are happy in announcing to the public, that they have surmounted the great difficulties opposed to them by their partner; and effected the return of the above gentlemen."

On July 26, 'The Quadrupeds of Quedlinburgh' was produced. It is a satire by Colman on the Managers of Covent Garden Theatre, for having introduced horses and elephants on their stage, that season. A most humorous play-bill, drawn out by Colman, excited the public to expect to see

more than was presented to them, and some disappointment occurred. The Extravaganza was, however, performed thirty-six nights. Liston played Dennis Brulgruddery this season for his benefit; and Colman, having had sufficient interest to get another month tacked to his licence, determined on taking second price, that he might in some measure compete with the Winter houses. The first price to the boxes was now raised from five to six shillings.

In September, Mr. Theodore Hook produced a farce full of fun, entitled 'Darkness Visible,' which was very successful; and on the 30th a piece was brought out under the name of 'Travellers' Benighted; or, the Forest of Rosenwald.' This was a dialogue version of the pantomime of Raymond and Agnes. It was attractive; to Mrs. Gibbs, the author was much indebted for her powerful and natural delineation of Marguerite.

Colman always looked upon Mathews as his trump card, but he had failed in engaging him for the season of 1811. By the following letter, however, it appears that he tried to induce Mathews to play for a part of the season.

"Dear Mathews, August 22, 1811.

"Many thanks for your letter. It appears to me that the chance of your engaging in the Haymarket being so very remote, it would be premature for *me* to mention terms; at all events (and indeed at any time), I think the proposition of remuneration should come from *you*. The owner of marketable goods should first put a price on them.

" My reasons for applying to you were, that I heard you did not mean to perform in the Lyceum at all during the next season,* that you had *rural* views of emolument, and that you speculated upon filling up the greater part of the ensuing twelve months in the country. Supposing such reports might be true, I thought it might be worth your while to come to me on the 15th of September next, and play till the 15th of October (when I close), and also to join me for the whole of *next* season, from the 15th May to the 15th October, 1812, occupying the intermediate months with money-getting out of London.

" But you tell me you will write to me again. After having opened thus much of my plan, you may perhaps look at it in an extended point of view, and give it further consideration. I most heartily rejoice to hear of your success. Believe me to be, my dear Mathews,

Very truly yours,
G. Colman."

About this time his Royal Highness the Duke of York obtained leave (from the King's Bench) for Colman to dine at Carlton House. He accompanied the Duke thither. On his walking through the apartments with him, Colman remarked, " What excellent lodgings ! I have nothing like them in the King's Bench!" After dinner, he exclaimed,—" Eh ! why this *is* wine ; pray, do tell me, who that fine looking fellow is at the head of the table ?" The good-natured Duke, said, " Hush, George, you'll get into a scrape." " No, no," said Colman, in a

* At this time, the Drury Lane Company were acting at the Old Lyceum Theatre, as they had done during the Winter Seasons, since the destruction of Drury Lane Theatre by fire, in February 1809.

louder voice, "I am come out to enjoy myself; I want to know who that fine, square-shouldered, magnificent-looking, agreeable fellow is, at the head of the table?" "Be quiet, George," interrupted the Duke, "You know it is the Prince." "Why then," continued Colman, still louder, "He is your elder brother. I declare he don't look half your age. Well! I remember the time when he sung a good song! and as I am come out for a lark, for only one day, if he is the same good fellow that he used to be, he would not refuse an old play-fellow." The Prince laughed, and sang. "What a magnificent voice," exclaimed Colman. "I have heard nothing to be compared to it for years. Such expression too! I'll be damned if I don't engage him for my theatre."*

It would appear that this freak gave no offence to the Royal host; for Colman was ever treated with kindness by George the Fourth. The dedication to his Random Records, which is here given, fully corroborates this.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

SIR,—To your Majesty I have the honour of dedicating, by gracious permission, these desultory Records of my Life; and from your Majesty's long continued patronage and favour I, now, chiefly derive "the means whereby I live." With feelings proud of such exalted protection, and a heart most truly grateful for such constant beneficence, I have the

* The above amusing anecdote, was related to us by an accomplished nobleman, an eye-witness of the scene.

honour to be, Sir, your Majesty's ever dutiful subject, and most devoted servant, George Colman.

Colman addressed the following letter to Mathews in consequence of a report, that he had engaged himself at Covent Garden.

"Melina Place, Westminster Road,

"My Dear Mathews, January 28, 1812.

"Reports are so strong in respect to your being now engaged at Covent Garden, and having no intention of performing with me, that, although I can scarcely conceive such a fact to be possible, I write for your positive contradiction of the above rumours, which have very lately reached me from various quarters. You cannot have forgotten that at our last parting I told you I considered our engagement as *concluded;* and that, although I must, *pro forma* put the proposition to Mr. Morris, yet as I and Mr. Winston had maturely deliberated upon your terms, and had made up our minds upon the expediency of acceding to them, for the good of the Theatre, we should, as the majority of the firm, ratify them, should Mr. Morris's answer turn out contrary to our expectations upon the point. When I talk of this application to Morris, '*pro forma*,' I do not mean to say that it was my intention not to consult him, positively and substantially. I have so consulted him; but yours being a matter which pressed, I had (with Winston) well weighed your proposals, and had decided as to the policy of the engagement, and as to the line to be pursued in case of Morris's objection or negative, and I apprised you of this, that there might be no chance of losing your assistance, through mistake, through indecision, or through any thing which might not appear *virtually*, if not formally, conclusive. I parted with you with the

fullest conviction that our bargain was '*done and done*' on both sides, and with this conviction I thought you to be as fully impressed when you quitted London. But supposing for a moment that you were not so fully impressed, and that you thought some further confirmation, in point of form, still necessary; even under such circumstances, I cannot think that you would treat me with less consideration and delicacy than you showed to Tom Sheridan towards the end of last summer, with whom you had so very far from concluded an engagement, that it has not been settled to this moment, or rather has long been entirely off. Still, having made some advances in such a bargain, you told me you could not think of engaging with me till you had pursued certain measures, so as positively to ascertain whether he left you at liberty. If you felt this as a point of honour incumbent on you towards *him*, the greater length you have gone in your arrangements with *me* (I repeat that I always thought it conclusive), must surely act much more forcibly on your mind. In short, I think it next to impossible that you can have thus flown off from me. But do not leave a shadow of doubt upon me; and let me hear from you instantly.

"It would be a waste of words to point out to you the extreme confusion and disappointment you would create in my theatrical plans. The moment you have refuted (which surely you must) the reports in question, I will transmit to you all the formalities of ratification, which, after all, were to be but a mere memorandum, and might as well have kept cool till our meeting. I sent to Mrs. Mathews some time ago for your direction, but she happened to be out. A few days ago, also, I sent again by letter, and had the favour of a line from her only yesterday, stating that she had been from home.

"You certainly would have heard much sooner, if I had not felt positive on the essential points as to the engage-

ment being decided between us. I rely on your *equity* and *honour*.

Yours, my Dear Mathews, very truly,

To C. Mathews, Esq. G. Colman."

The Chancery Suit of the partners of the Haymarket Theatre, still kept all parties at "sixes and sevens," but Colman was extremely anxious to retain Mathews at the Haymarket, as is manifested by the following letter.

"Melina Place, Westminster Road,

"My Dear Mathews, February 10, 1812.

"I think you owe an apology to yourself, for it is evident you think Charles Mathews is to be suspected, much more than I ever did, or I trust, possibly can doubt him. You have reversed, too, some of your original feelings in respect to my unfortunate italics. The concluding part of my letter (in which poor equity and honour are scored), you first tell me is a sort of salve for bruises, which God knows I had no intention to give; but afterwards you inform me that it is a downright bruise in itself. Why omit all notice of those sundry expressions, which surely may prove in what spirit I made my application for your positive *contradiction* of *rumours?* rumours which I could scarcely think possible. If you take the trouble of recurring to my letter, you will perceive that this sentiment is uppermost throughout; and if, after all the multiplied and strong reports which had reached me, some through a man (though not personally and directly communicated to me by him), who had recently left you; if, after this, I indicated any degree of doubt, by naturally going to the fountain head for a refutation, I have only acted towards you as I should towards any other person under the same circumstances.

"My suspicions, therefore, (since you call them so)

were such as I should feel towards all mankind, and were by no means individually levelled. The thought, also, that we might have misunderstood each other as to our engagement, had some operation upon my mind; and in that point of view, let me propose to alter your reading of 'premature castigation,' into 'explanatory statement,' given as fully as I could at a very critical juncture to save time, which the delays of repeated discussions, containing answers and rejoinders by the post might have occasioned. I cannot, in conscience towards myself, satisfy you by saying that I have behaved very ill to you; but from the very bottom of my heart, my dear Mathews, I assure you it was foreign to my intentions to wound your feelings, even in the most remote degree; and I am as much pained in having, even unwittingly, pained you, as you can be.

"As to the proposals from Covent Garden, of that hereafter. I have much to say on that subject when we meet. In the mean time, recollect that I wish you (as I do all others, free at this moment as you are from the great 'Winter Kings'), in any bargain you may make with the superior powers, to stipulate that I may claim your exclusive assistance for *the whole* of my season, in any future engagement which may be formed between us, so that I may be as independent as possible of the courtesies I have hitherto experienced in procuring *leave*, as far as it goes, to engage performers who were originally Haymarketers. This is but equitable. Morris is like Scrub, and will say nothing, 'pro nor con' till there is a peace. In other words, he will neither be an *ass* nor *dissenter* as to any engagement, till the point of management is settled, so, as I am advised 'by my counsel, learned in the laws of the land,' I go on without him; and you are engaged by me and Winston, in behalf of the theatre; by me as the director, and by both of us as the majority of partners.

"The Master's report as to my capability of managing under my present situation is most particularly strong

against Morris. This is the last of his two grand points, and he is licked upon both.

"N.B.—Send me, as soon as possible, any hints, new fancies, &c. which you think would be effective in your own representation, that I may introduce them in a Prelude which I shall write for the opening, and which I purpose to rest chiefly on your shoulders.

"I was out on Friday; did not get your letter till post hours were over. On Saturday, up to my neck in business, and could not write to you. Yesterday was a *dies non* with the London mails. To-day, if length be a dose, I think you have it, and so God bless you. With best wishes and regards to you,

Yours, my Dear Mathews, most truly,

G. Colman."

The differences between Colman and Morris frequently placed the performers in very embarrassing positions in regard to the disputants, as appears by the following letter from Colman to Mathews:—

"Melina Place, Westminster Road,

"My Dear Mathews, 4th April, 1812.

"Many thanks for your communication from Glasgow, which I received yesterday. I have unavoidably lost a day before I could answer it, by waiting for my solicitor's opinion, who advises that you should not answer Morris's notice. And had Morris's notices the effect (which they have not had in any one instance) of inducing performers to throw up their engagements, Mr. Grove, to whom he does not object, would distance *longo intervallo*, as a favourite with the town, all the remaining actors and actresses in the grand Haymarket company. He endeavours to mislead you in respect to Munden, to whose terms he also objected; and he only gives them to you as he (Morris) is willing to have them; and so, probably, he

may misrepresent your terms to others. As to what steps you are to take, he *might* pay you the salary as it has been agreed upon by the majority of his partners. He attempted to play the same silly game last year, and was foiled. He objected to pay Elliston, but was obliged to pay him every shilling.

" Thanks for your hints relative to your proposed personations, much of which I hope to work with good effect into the Prelude, but cannot fix down to them quite so soon as I expected. I shall, however, have finished (the Prelude I mean) by the end of this month, so that there will be a fortnight's interval between its completion and production. Tell me in your next, when you propose being in town. I hope there can be no doubt of your arriving time enough to prepare yourself for the above sketch, with which we ought to open. I wish you were not going to Ireland. Plague on that sea between us. The proverb does not apply to you, but don't take a dip between Holyhead and Dublin. I am glad to hear your opinion of Chippendale, for I have engaged him. He was of the Haymarket hundred in his earliest days. I write in the greatest haste; so, adieu! and continue to prosper. Write soon.

" Ever yours, my Dear Mathews,
G. Colman.

" P.S.—Hook certainly goes to the Isle of France, at which I grieve; but with a good appointment, at which I rejoice; but shall lose a most pleasant, clever, and good fellow. He talks of going in three weeks."

The disputes between the proprietors of the Haymarket theatre still continued, and the following advertisement appeared in all the daily papers.

LITTLE THEATRE IN THE HAYMARKET.

" Whereas by the Agreement, dated the 4th day of June, 1805, entered into by the proprietors of the above theatre,

it was agreed that no author, performer, or other persons should be employed, retained, or discharged, in, for, or from the said concern, without the assent of the proprietors; and that no repairs or alterations should be made, nor orders to tradesmen given without the assent of the proprietors.

"Now I, the undersigned David Edward Morris, one of the proprietors of the said theatre, do hereby give notice to all persons whom it may concern, that I am not answerable, nor will be responsible for any engagement whatever, already entered into by my co-proprietors George Colman and James Winston, or either of them, or which they, or either of them may enter into, with any author, performer, or other person, touching the said concern, unless such engagements be in writing, and signed by me; and I am not, and will not be answerable or responsible for any repairs or alterations in or to the said theatre, nor for any orders given to tradesmen, unless such repairs or alterations, and orders to tradesmen respectively, be made or given by directions in writing, signed by them and me.

"Dated the 5th day of May, 1812.

Witness, D. E. Morris,
26, Suffolk Street, Charing Cross."

On Mrs. Mountain taking a benefit at the Italian Opera-house, Mathews's name was announced amongst the performers on that evening, which produced the following letter from Colman:

"Melina Place, Westminster Road,

"My Dear Mathews, 8th May, 1812.

"I find you advertised to appear on the west-side of the Haymarket, the very day previous to your performance on the East! This is very prejudicial to the summer house in which you are to assist us for the season, and will

give a fine opportunity for court and chancery charges to Mr. Morris. Surely, my dear Mathews, if you think for a moment, this ought not to be. I wish success to any individual whom I may know, who takes a benefit at the Opera, but as manager of the summer theatre (whose conduct is so malignantly canvassed by one of his partners), it becomes my duty to prevent your performing on the above occasion, if I have the right to do so.

"Yours very truly,

G. Colman."

In 1812, Colman published his 'Poetical Vagaries,' a work full of his usual broad rich humour. This year, Terry made his bow to a London audience, at the summer theatre, and by a happy mixture of industry, good taste, and mature reflection, won his way in the good graces of the frequenters of the Haymarket theatre, and was engaged at Covent-Garden for the following season. He made his first appearance (from Edinburgh), May 20, as Lord Ogleby. Subsequently he acted Shylock, Job Thornberry, Sir Edward Mortimer, and took the routine of principal characters. On the 15th of June, a farce called 'The Sleep-Walker' was produced, from the pen of Mr. Oulton. In this piece Mathews made so great a sensation that it was performed fifty-three nights during the season. On the 8th of July a drama called 'The Child of Chance' appeared, and on the 24th, a comedy in three acts, entitled 'The Fortune Hunters,' but neither of these was very successful. On the 15th of August, another three-act comedy was produced, under the name of 'Look at Home,' which was played fre-

quently, even to the end of the season, during the last month of which second price was again taken.

In 1813, owing to the continued violent disputes between the proprietors, and the embarrassments occasioned by their affairs being brought before the Court of Chancery, no performance whatever took place, although a bill was printed announcing the opening of the theatre, and stating that the celebrated Mrs. Jordan was engaged.

At length the Haymarket theatre opened for the season in 1814, on the 16th of June; but the quarrel, it would appear, still continued, and the management was out of order, for no new piece was produced until July the 18th, when a farce, entitled 'Come and see,' from the pen of Baron Langsdorff, was brought out, and acted thirteen nights. In this year Mathews attempted Falstaff, with great credit to his humour, study, and reading of the part.

The summer season of the Haymarket theatre experienced a severe blow by an accident which happened to Mathews and Terry, who were thrown out of a gig. Terry had two of his ribs broken, and Mathews's hip joint was dislocated, which was the cause of his lameness, and great suffering for the remainder of his life. The subjoined letter was addressed to Mathews on the occasion by Mr. Colman, who was very naturally anxious for the health of his favourite actor, and his return to the theatre.

"Melina Place, Westminster Road,

"My Dear Mathews, 7th August, 1814.

"I know you are as anxious about the forthcoming Harlequinade as I am, and therefore trust you will not

think me unfeelingly pressing upon you by endeavouring to ascertain as soon as possible when it can be produced; or by submitting to your consideration means which may hasten the accomplishment of our wishes. The progress towards a perfect use of your leg is, unfortunately, so uncertain, that there is no calculating upon it: it may be four-and-twenty hours, a week, a month, or longer. Now you say (and I am duly sensible of your friendly zeal), that rather than they should anticipate us at the Lyceum, you would come forward on crutches; but I conceive that a good stout stick, such as serves to prop many a gouty old gentleman, might in two or three days answer your purpose. If they were ready to bring out their pantomime at the other house, directly, you would directly come forward at ours. Why not then (provided it threatens no serious injury to your general health) rescue us from the losses we are nightly experiencing, from our rivals having got the start of us as much as if they were acting "Harlequin, the Black or White," instead of their frequent "Frederick the Great," or anything else? It would be most unnecessarily tedious to point out to you, that we have not even common stock to our backs which is not worn to rags; that your attractions in old matter, as well as all intended novelty, is of infinite consequence; that this cursed accident has lost us time; that this is the 7th of August, and that the winter theatres are to open before the middle of September, &c.

"But this let me tell you in confidence. I was driven to open, *malgré moi*, much sooner than I wished by Mr. Morris. I predicted loss till the giants finished their campaigns, which occurred.

"I then hoped we might pull up our deficiencies, instead of which I have been thrown out of all my projects, and 'loss upon loss' is the consequence. Nothing now remains but the pantomime to get us tolerably even; which time will render impossible, unless it be produced almost in-

stantly. I can expect no gain this season. I hoped for recovery; but unless you can give your aid, I shall 'on horror's head horrors accumulate.'

"After this preamble, it only remains to say, can you, my dear Mathews, enable me to advertise that the pantomime will be produced on any day (which you will name) between this and next Sunday?

"Yours ever, most truly,
G. Colman."

This pantomime was entitled 'Hocus Pocus, or Harlequin washed white.' Mathews appeared in it on the 12th of August, as a speaking Harlequin, with the following apology, delivered by Terry, then stage manager.

"Ladies and Gentlemen,

"Before the curtain rises, I am requested to say a few words to you in behalf of an invalid.

"Mr. Mathews still continues to suffer much, very much from his late severe accident; but he trusts that his anxiety in coming forward thus early to perform his duty to you, and to fulfil his engagements here, will atone for his deficiencies in bodily activity, requisite to the character he is about to sustain. A former very celebrated proprietor of this theatre once enjoyed the fullest favour as 'a devil upon two sticks,' and it is hoped, nay, it cannot be doubted, that you will now extend your utmost indulgence to a harlequin upon *one!*"

On the 23rd of August a new comedy from the rapid pen of Mr. Jameson was produced, under the title of 'Love and Gout.' We are inclined to think that some alteration was made in this piece to

accommodate it to the lameness of Mathews. The comedy was successful.

In 1815, Colman, it would appear by the following letter, renewed Mathews's engagement for the season at the Haymarket theatre.

"Melina Place, Westminster Road,

"My Dear Mathews, 7th April, 1815.

"I lament to find that you meditate a jolting journey, which will consign you to the mail, when you dread the motion of a hackney-coach to convey you half-a-mile beyond Westminster-bridge. I have communicated your return from Brighton to my partners, and, as in duty bound, now convey their sentiments to you; but as they agree, I shall embody them with my own, and write as from myself. The Haymarket theatre cannot afford you more money, but it first started you in London, has been an old customer to you, and dealt for your talents in the gross; and much might be argued against its suffering through country purchases of your present popularity by retail, a retail scooped out of our wholesale engagement. You were unable to fulfil one of these rural spirting bargains last year of course; the Provincial Manager did not give you a shilling, but the Haymarket did, and with a shrunk treasury, through the unfortunate accident which rendered you incapable of performing a part of your compact. You know me, I think, too well to attribute my mentioning this circumstance in any spirit of illiberal recurrence.

"I had much rather recur to your great bodily exertions which your zeal induced you to suffer under great bodily pain; but it falls in my way, as general pleading of wholesale trading, *versus* chandlery.

"'Tis true, as you observe, that this is your day; but the individual attraction of an individual actor generally

declines faster than his talents. Novelty ceases to be novel upon repetition, and days have their end. Now, when your day in the country may be over, and you may be every whit as good an actor as you are at this instant, you would think it hard if the Haymarket theatre said, "Your salary must be lowered, because you can get nothing worth going out of town for in the summer." Yet this language would have the same basis of argument as your own; would be precisely your own principle in an inverse ratio. Consider this, and much more, which the above sketch of my motives may suggest to you, and then act according to your own feelings. Should they decide you to be a week from the Haymarket during its season (which may probably consist of no more than seven weeks altogether), I do beg and entreat you that this said week may be our commencing, *our very first* week; for, when you once begin with me, your going would be destruction. Surely you can arrange to get away a week before Covent Garden closes, whether the Haymarket should open before that time or not. This would much assist my little scheme. Think for me, and do your best; or shall I call on you on Wednesday next? I cannot sooner. Remember, I consider you as engaged to me.

Yours most truly,

G. Colman."

To Charles Mathews, Esq.

In this year Jones took his benefit at Covent Garden theatre, and amongst other attractions, introduced a masquerade on the stage. Colman, who had always admired the domestic worth, gentlemanly manners, and histrionic talents of Richard Jones, wrote at the performer's request the following lines, as an introduction to the Masquerade:

PROLOGUE FOR MR. JONES'S MASQUERADE,

Given on the 3rd of June, 1815, *at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.*

When Wine and Masquerades were hither sent,
Neatly imported from the Continent,
Then Johnny Bull each continental freight
Incontinently did adulterate;
And Masquerades, announced in town, forebode
As downright trash as Port upon the road.

Take, in a careless hasty sketch display'd,
The joys of London's public masquerade;—
A midnight squeeze, which ends in morning riot,
All roaring!—no,—the *Dominoes* are quiet;
In lutestring state *they* stalk, and seem to say,
We are, by night, just what we are by day,
Mere Bond-street Loungers, come to see the fun,
And as for character,—we keep up none.

Then pouring in, come Punches, Turks, and Tailors,
Heavy-heel'd Harlequins, and inland Sailors;
Jews without Hebrew, brogueless Pats from Cork,
And Clodpoles without dialect from York;
Sportsmen, who scarce have seen one furrow's ridge,
And ne'er shot anything but London Bridge;
Attorneys' Clerks as Shepherds,—doom'd to know
No fields but those which Lincoln's Inn can show;
But who, if not by sheep, by parchment thrive,
And scrawl upon the skins they never drive.
These Corydons address, in cockney tone,
The high-rouged Phyllises from Marybone;
The high-rouged Phyllises, more kind than fair,
Bid not the Shepherds, blest with cash, despair;
Preferring far the *notes* of modern swains
To those which old Arcadians piped on plains.

Thickening the throng, see staggering upright Quakers,
Butchers, Haymakers, Bakers, Kennel-rakers,
Nun, Gipsey, Jockey, Friar, Cobbler, King;
All, all, that Chaos can together bring,
Sans wit, sans humour, and "sans every thing."

Here Songsters squall,—fat waltzers there advance,
To crush our toes with what they call a dance;
A dance at which a well-taught bear would blush;
Till supper is announced,—and, then, a rush!
The Masks get neither seats nor meats enough—
Rolls stale, ham rank, pies mouldy, chickens tough;
Cold punch grown warm, dead porter, wine that's rum,
And Waiters "coming" who will never come.
This scramble o'er, the revel rises high,
With Debauchees and Dollies in full cry;
Till all in blazing sunshine reel away,
With fever'd head-aches to doze out the day.

To-night, we try from foreign schools to glean,
And, if we can, to *regulate* the scene;
To cleanse the home-bred specimens before us,
And be, if not less dull, much more decorous.

CHAPTER XII.

1816—1822.

The Haymarket Theatre in 1816—Exit by Mistake—Tokely—The Actor of all Work—Teasing made Easy—The Green Man—Lord Erskine and Colman—Armata—Increased size of Theatres—Education of Actors—Royal Academy of Music at Paris—Miss O'Neil—Colman's Jokes—Pigeons and Crows—Colman re-visits Mulgrave Castle—Address to the Year 1819—X. Y. Z.—Colman appointed Lieutenant to the Yeomen of the Guard—John Taylor—Rev. Robert Lowth—Early acquaintance renewed—Correspondence with Lowth—His rapid Illness and Death.

The Haymarket Theatre again opened for the season on the 1st of July, 1816. The company included Fawcett, Jones, Terry, Tokely, Russell, Duruset, Mrs. Glover, Mrs. Davenport, Mrs. Gibbs, Miss Carew, &c. Miss Copeland (since the clever Mrs. Fitzwilliam) also made her first appearance in London this season. She was a little, pretty, fair girl, and acted with remarkable spirit and ability. On the 22nd July, Mr. Jameson brought out a comedy entitled 'Exit by Mistake,' in which the character of Crockery, enacted by Tokely, convulsed his audience with laughter. Jones, Terry, and Mrs. Gibbs, contributed materially to the complete success of that drama.

After the usual success of a short wet summer, the Haymarket Theatre closed with A Chip of the Old

Block, Exit by Mistake, and The Dead Alive, for the benefit of Russell. Mr. Mathews made his first appearance this season in the characters of Chip and Motley. After the comedy, the following Address, from the pen of Colman, was delivered by Terry.

"Ladies and Gentlemen,

"I am deputed by the proprietors of this Theatre, to offer you their most cordial thanks, for the patronage with which you have honoured them during their very short season. They lament that the increased speculations of higher theatrical powers, whose influence at present must regulate their motions, so very much curtail the period of exertion on this spot, to merit your favour. But one material ingredient in theatres should be wit, and brevity, we are told, is the soul of it; if so, the proprietors here should feel particularly obliged to their neighbours for rendering their seat of dramatic exhibition, wittier and wittier every year."

In 1817, we find, by the following letter, Colman again in treaty with Mathews for his summer campaign.

"Melina Place, Westminster Road,

"Dear Mathews, 24th Jan. 1817.

"The time has arrived (perhaps a little gone by), for closing engagements of the most consequence to the Haymarket theatre. But I have waited thus long since our last interview, when I broached my present business to you, in the hope that you 'would come, at last, to comfort me.'

"Have the goodness, now, to decide whether you will or will not belong to the chosen few. It is unnecessary to tell you that I shall be gratified in the renewal of a professional

commerce with one in whom talent and zealous integrity are combined. I should have spoken in the plural throughout, for I give you the sentiments of myself and Co.

Very truly yours,

G. Colman."

The Haymarket season of 1817 was rendered remarkable by the production of a one-act piece, called 'The Actor of All Work.' It was from the pen of Colman, and afforded the inimitable Mathews an opportunity of exhibiting his varied and wonderful powers. This piece was produced on the 13th of July, and ran all the remainder of the season, the benefits excepted. Mathews, Terry, Tokely, Jones, Mrs. Glover, Mrs. Gibbs, Miss Carew, Mrs. Davenport, &c., aided the summer campaign greatly by their efforts; and a three-act comedy by Mr. Jameson, called 'Teasing made Easy,' raised Tokely to increased eminence, in the character of Peter Pastoral.

The season of 1818 included the names of Liston, Russell, Tokely, Terry, Jones, Warde, Connor, Mrs. Gibbs, Mrs. Liston, Miss E. Blanchard, &c. Mr. Jameson produced this year a comedy entitled 'Nine Points of the Law,' which had not the merit or success of its predecessors by the same pen; and on the 15th of August, the comedy of 'The Green Man,' (a free translation from the French,) by Jones the comedian, was represented for the first time with considerable success. The comedy contained much genuine wit. From the dedication of the author to Colman, prefixed to the printed copy

of the play, it would appear that it had undergone his revision and able additions.

"My Dear Sir,

"My apology for dedicating this humble attempt to the most eminent dramatic writer of the age, is, that it enables me publicly to acknowledge the many acts of private friendship you have from time to time conferred on me; and the assistance which, in the course of my profession, I have so frequently derived from your masterly pen.

"To your improving hand, which has the magic power of producing verdure from an unfertile soil, I attribute, in a great degree, the very flattering reception with which 'The Green Man' has been honoured by the public; accept, my dear Sir, my warmest thanks, and believe me,

Your sincere admirer,
Grateful friend, and humble servant,
Richard Jones."

After a short but most productive season, the Haymarket theatre closed on Saturday, 12th September, with the customary address, delivered by Mr. Terry.

In 1818, Colman and Lord Erskine entered into a correspondence on a theatrical subject, occasioned by his Lordship having printed a book entitled 'Armata,' in one volume, to which, after some little interval, he added a second. The work is partly of a political and partly of a satirical description. By Armata is meant England; and Swallowal represents London.

Colman's valued and noble friend kindly made him a present of these volumes, accompanied by the following letter:

"Upper Berkeley Street,

"Dear Sir, March 10, 1818.

"As men of real genius are always the most indulgent critics, I send you my little Romance without fear. The two parts are very different. The first was intended to be a kind of bolus to swallow my old politics in, which were too long passed to be a political pamphlet; and, having got out of this our world, without going to that from whose bourn no traveller returns, I was obliged to come back again to town, describing it, however, as if in the world I had just left. I should like to know whether you think my remarks upon the stage are correct.

Believe me to be always,
Yours most faithfully,
Erskine."

"I ought to apologize," says Colman "perhaps, for printing a panegyric upon my humble abilities, but I consider the commencement of Lord Erskine's letter as the mere expression of courtesy. Whether he mean't it so or not, I supposed him in earnest when he desired to hear what I thought of his Remarks on the Stage. Those remarks were comprised under three heads; namely, 'Occasional tumults in the London Theatres; the dimensions of the Two principal Theatres; and the Education of Actors.'

"I sent him my thoughts he requested, crudely, though somewhat copiously written; wherein I took the liberty to differ entirely from the noble Lord on the first and last topics; on the second, we for the most part agreed. The first more immediately appertains to those half-repentant reflections, on turning dramatist, which I have stated myself to

have made, after having divided the house, though with a large majority in my favour, upon the question of my Ways and Means: so on this first topic I now give an extract from a copy of the manuscript which I forwarded to Lord Erskine.

"'There was no tumult or disorder (in the theatre) which I was told almost never took place but when something was radically wrong.' *

"It is taken for granted that the expression of 'radically wrong' refers to the London Stage and the conduct of its concerns, and not to the audience: but although, almost never, is a qualifying expression, it seems to give more credit to that mass of people which fills a playhouse, than perhaps it deserves. The dramatic, like the political stage, if it may be compared with that much more important scene of action, may be pestered and galled with incendiaries and malignants; with Radicals who should be uprooted, and Reformers who should reform themselves.

"A theatrical audience being a multitude, it is to be recollected that a small part of a multitude can foment 'tumult and disorder;' and in all multitudes there are many to be found who are illiberal, capricious, and ill-judging enough to be frequently clamorous about many matters which are not 'radically wrong.' A play-going multitude is, moreover, less apprehensive than another mob of consequences arising from its distemperature; for all its component parts, from the nobleman to the cobbler, are the 'Drama's Patrons;' and the pro-

* 'Armata,' Vol. II., p. 108.

tégés who depend upon their favour seldom can, and seldom dare appeal from the laws of their patrons to the laws of their country. Is it to be conceived that such a heterogeneous body, invested with such powers of being turbulent, will not often be so without just cause?

"Few men glide through even the most private life without encountering an enemy; but a dramatist, however personally retired, is virtually, and in a peculiar point of view before the public, and accumulates fresh opponents as often as he courts fresh notice. His mere act of coming forward to establish a name is a sort of assumption; a writer who professes to amuse and at the same time admonish mankind, to sway their passions and to improve their morals, implies that he thinks himself somewhat more intellectually gifted than his neighbours. Now, whether his work be radically right or wrong, men are prepared to cavil at the lessons of such a preceptor; and will not this propensity in an audience so far at least augment the rigour of fastidious criticism, that stern justice may, in some cases, forget to temper herself with mercy?

"But, besides this probable feeling in an audience, for it is only mentioned conjecturally, there have been, doubtless, various persons who, on the first night of a new play, have aimed at the author's miscarriage from private pique or some uncharitable or wanton motive; and who have been upon the alert to effect it by 'tumult and disorder.'

"Envy alone is the parent of mischief; and, should the playwright have already attained pre-

eminence, the very flood of his popularity pours upon him a number of invidious foes, as the clearest torrent brings a certain portion of rubbish.

" If a manager ' writes himself,' as it is expressed in The Critic, he is more obnoxious to enmity than other dramatists ; because, in addition to the adversaries which all dramatists have to encounter in common, various would-be authors and actors, whose offers he has rejected, or which he has accepted to their own public exposure, are outrageous against him, and come themselves, and form a party when they can, to explode his play, on its first representation. Is it not to be said, on these occasions, when to wound the man through his Muse is the latent object, that ' tumult and disorder' arise from something which is not ' radically wrong' on the part of the author and manager?

" Any dramatist (be he manager or not), when he first brings his plays into action, exposes himself more to the attacks of malice and wanton hostility than any other description of writer. Authors for the closet can never be absolutely discredited through such a condemnation as causes immediate and decisive failure; but the dramatist draws a bill upon Fame, at sight; it is acknowledged or protested at the moment it is presented ; those who would rejoice at seeing him a bankrupt, are not likely to neglect the opportunity of dishonouring his draught; and this is to be effected by ' tumult and disorder,' when the million has nothing ' radically wrong' to reprobate.

" There are not only enemies, as above mentioned, of the several dramatists, but enemies also, of the

particular houses in which their dramas are produced; there are Drury Lane and Covent Garden party-men; who, accordingly as they are attached to the interests of one house, are hostile to the prosperity of the other. During the first night of a representation at Covent Garden, I have heard the call of 'turn out those noisy fellows from Drury Lane,' and *vice versâ;* but it would be very unjust to infer that such low zealots are set on, or at all encouraged in their malevolent endeavours, by the rival proprietors.

"Not very long ago, it was the fashion, a fashion not yet, perhaps, entirely worn out, for the bucks and blades, and bloods of the town, to go to a new play on purpose to condemn it; this tumultuous attempt to annihilate anything, and everything, before it could be ascertained to be right or wrong, being denominated good sport, and high fun.

"During the greater portion of time consumed in the disgraceful O. P. Riots, surely the rioters were 'radically wrong,' (indeed rioters can never be right,) after the Proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre had ceased to be wrong at all. The Proprietors were clumsy politicians in attempting to force Catalani, a foreigner from the Italian Opera, upon the English stage, at the moment they were raising their prices upon the public; the public seized this circumstance to resist an increased demand upon them for entrance; blending the abstract question of Catalani, and of certain additional Private Boxes, with the question of an advanced price upon admission; an advance fairly justified by the enormous, though

certainly absurd expense incurred in building a new theatre on so spacious and magnificent a plan. The proprietors, in submission, relinquished Catalani, and rescinded the additional private boxes; notwithstanding which, 'tumults and disorders,' of a very ruffian-like description, were systematically continued, when nothing remained 'radically wrong' to protract them.

"Lately,* no *débutant* could appear in King Richard the Third without an evident party to explode him, as soon as he entered upon the stage, because Mr. Kean was their idol. There is not the most distant intention to insinuate here that Mr. Kean would not spurn at this outrage in his admirers, on the contrary, it is trusted he would be one of the first to declare that they were 'disorderly and tumultuous,' before anything 'wrong' could be discovered, except in themselves.

"Whence arise the deafening vociferations, when there is a full house, of 'turn him out!' and 'throw him over?' Why is a vocal performer so often kept on a see-saw, called back, sent off, called back again, about the *encore* of a song, and at last, after ten minutes, perhaps, of confusion, obliged to sing it in the midst of the 'tumult and disorder' of a divided audience?

"Again, why is a play, on the first exhibition of a Christmas Pantomime, acted almost in dumb-show, like the mummery that is to follow it, in consequence of the 'tumult and disorder' of the spec-

* It should be remembered that this was written in the year 1818.

tators? Why is the same uproar kept up on an Easter Monday? Why, during the intervals, however short, between the acts, is the stage strewed with apples, and orange-peels, accompanied in their descent thither, by the shouts, groans, whistles, catcalls, yells, and screeches of the turbulent assemblage which has so elegantly impelled its vegetable projectiles from the upper regions? Why was poor Nosey, of the Orchestra, not yet quite forgotten by veteran play-goers, tormented nightly by hearing the *soubriquet* he had acquired from his proboscis, bellowed at him from the galleries? Why are disturbances in the upper boxes, and lobbies, among blackguards and women of the town, by no means rare? Certainly from nothing 'radically wrong' in the conductors of a theatre.

"In pursuing this side of the question, it is freely admitted, on the other hand, that very much theatrical trash may be swallowed peaceably and orderly, through favour and cabal; but this admission no more relinquishes what has been advanced, than allowing one eye to be in a head is an acknowledgment that there is not another: and, putting both prejudices and predilections, to be found in many parts of an audience, out of the question, how far there may be want of judgment in that public whom managers and actors are obliged to call *the discerning*, how far such a bulk of discerners may *not* discern, how far its rude breath may blow down merits it might uphold, while it supports the bubbles it should break, is left to future consideration.

"Much might be superadded, to fortify an opinion that 'almost never,' in the preceding quotation, is too lenient an expression towards that many-headed monster, by which a London Theatre exists; it is, however, the lenity of a British mind, putting the best gloss upon national character; a lenity fraught with the *amor patriæ*.

"The above animadversions, which were transmitted to the noble author of Armata, at his own desire, contain all that has any bearing upon my reasons for an incipient, but now confirmed, dislike to those turbulent and often humiliating ordeals which the professed dramatist must repeatedly undergo.

"Upon his Lordship's second question, which relates to the enormous dimensions of our two principal theatres, he says, 'let no apology be made for the magnitude of their playhouses;' deeming such magnitude 'a very great defect.'

"On his third and last point, the 'Education of Theatrical performers,' I give my sentiments.

"Another cause has long obstructed a more continued succession of superior actors, but which, for the improved manners and genius of many of them, both dead and living, has been for some time insensibly wearing away; I mean the estimation in which the stage has been regarded.*

"This is delicately worded, 'estimation,' according to the sense in which the author has employed

* 'Armata,' Vol. II., p. 110.

it, being a tender term for downright disrepute. In reference to the stage, he proceeds by saying: 'To secure for it a perpetual and still increasing lustre, the road should be open, as in other professions, to the most liberal considerations, nothing else can invite its professors to learned and polished educations; without which, in the superior branches of acting, there can be no brilliant succession.'* And, further on, 'to bring the stage, therefore, in England, and indeed every where else, to its proper bearings, its professors must be cherished and respected.†

"But should it not be asserted, that the obstructive cause, namely, 'the estimation (meaning disrepute) in which the stage has been regarded,' has long actually worn out, rather than that it 'has been for some time insensibly wearing away? and is it fair to complain that there has not been a long-'continued succession of superior actors' in our metropolis? all such succession, at least, as the most favourable estimation of the stage can produce; for though such estimation may 'invite its professors' to polish themselves, it cannot give them absolute genius; a succession of which must always be a matter of chance.

"Actors are, and have been for a length of time, in this country, frequently seen at tables with the nobility; when those among them who have the manners of gentlemen are 'respected' accordingly; and they all meet respect as far as their talents, which procure them invitations to such tables, have a claim to it.

* 'Armata,' pp. 110, 111. † *ib.* p. 112.

" Without going further back, does not Pope say, speaking of Cibber,

' Has not Colley, too, his Lord, &c. ?'

and surely, in the present day, no body of men enjoy more opportunities of mingling in the society of their superiors in rank than actors. With these facilities, even courted as they are by persons of high birth, the rest must depend upon themselves ; but it does not appear that good dinners, in good company, lead the generality of them to the pursuits of literature.

" Without which learned and polished education, in the superior branches of acting there can be no brilliant succession. We might have self-taught genius even from the desert, but the ordinary soil of nature must be highly dressed. Does the learned and ingenious traveller to Armata mean to say that we should have a school for actors? a school to teach them all the dead and living languages ; a college to lecture them on the old classics ; to instruct them in ancient and modern history, in logic, ethics, mathematics, in the Belles Lettres, and in fashions ? Does he opine that such a school is indispensable to drill performers, in order to prepare them for the representation of the heroes of Greece, the emperors of Rome, the old kings and barons of England, the gentlemen in the days of Henry the Eighth, Queen Anne, his late Majesty George the Second, and his present Majesty George the Third? If so, this seems to be much more than is necessary.

"That the soil of nature is better for being 'highly dressed,' is, in a general point of view, indisputable; but what high dressing will most enrich the soil of an actor's genius is another consideration. And may not deep learning sometimes stiffen genius (particularly the genius of an actor) into pedantry? as the stays and backboards of pretty misses mend their shapes by destroying their ease.'

"Is it not rather an easier task for actors of any genius to perform kings, heroes, and gentlemen, than to write them; as Shakspeare did, with little or no pretensions to learning? and did not Shakspeare, as a dramatist, with his 'small Latin and less Greek*,' some read it 'no Greek,' surpass Ben Jonson with all his erudition?

"And then, what is to be done with the females of a theatre? must they be learned, too? Can they not represent queens, and heroines, and gentlewomen, without going to school, or to college, or to routs, or to court? Queen Elizabeth talked and wrote Latin; but can no woman act Queen Elizabeth, unless she is a scholar? or a Roman matron, unless she has been grounded in the Roman language, or the Roman history? or may not Mrs. Siddons have reached the height of her great theatrical celebrity without being a blue-stocking?

"There is at Paris an 'Ecole Royale de Musique,' an establishment upon which the King of France

* Ben Jonson's celebrated charge against Shakspeare; see Colman the Elder's Prose Works, 1787, Vol. II., p. 178.

expends 168,000 francs, or 7000*l.* per year*; the object of which is to instruct, under the ablest masters, four hundred young persons of both sexes, in all the branches of vocal and instrumental music and acting: there is, moreover, a course of French grammar, versification, and as much history as is necessary; also, a course called *Tenue de Corps*, which is the art of disposing the body and limbs to the greatest possible advantage, and a course of dancing.

"Frenchmen, it is well known, profess to carry their ideas of the stage, like many other of their ideas, to the extreme point of refinement. Their Tragedy, in particular, is so refined, that it is much too sublime for the taste of John Bull, or for nature; but it is to be observed, in the above-mentioned Ecole, how very small a proportion of its studies are allotted to learning, or to classical education. Music, no doubt, must be taught, in all countries, to those who would attain eminence as public singers; to this the Ecole attends, and adds fencing and dancing to give the graces. Declamation, too, they teach, and French tragedians do declaim with a vengeance! But, after all this, the pupils are no further instructed than in the grammar of their native tongue, in versification, for the improvement of the ear, and as much history as is necessary.

"Now, no performer of good common sense

* Again the reader is requested to remember that this was written in 1818.

and understanding can read one of Shakspeare's historical plays, in which he is to act, without deriving from it as much instruction, as to character, manners, and customs, as may enable him to enter into the spirit of his part. It would be going too far to say that more historical knowledge would not be beneficial to him, but the play itself might furnish him with as much history as is necessary for the occasion.

"It is presumed that a genius for 'genteel comedy,' as it is called, is quick in catching the manners of a gentleman; a few lessons among the upper ranks, may, therefore, be sufficient for him: but it is curious to observe in private theatricals, that the amateurs, from whom the professed actor is to learn deportment and manners, are a thousand times more awkward upon a stage than a regular performer of very moderate ability.

"The expression of the passions is one great and primary part of a superior actor's skill; and, as to tragedy, the art of exhibiting the sudden and violent commotions of mind, in King Lear, Othello, Macbeth, and various other characters, is not to be brought to perfection by the study of books, nor by an intercourse with the most highly polished society. An actor of the passions obtains inconsiderable aid from the library, and much less from the drawing-room: he must closely watch the effects of impulsive nature in universal man.

"Many instances might be brought of actors who have been superior, without the advantage of the *literæ humaniores*, or of familiar habits with

the great; nay, of superior actors seemingly rather below par in intellect, except in their profession. Powell, the tragedian, who died young, was highly successful; he came upon the stage, uncultivated, from his desk in an attorney's office, and was considered in private life to be a person of rather inferior understanding. Where did the young tragic actress*, lately retired from Covent Garden Theatre, procure the graces and energies for which she has been so justly admired? where did she learn to personate, not only the Juliets, and Belvideras, and Isabellas, but the Lady Townleys, Mrs. Oakleys, &c.? in minor theatrical companies, travelling about the obscurer districts of Ireland.

"'The most uneducated,' says the Traveller to Armata, 'may excel in clowns, and buffoons, and lower characters;' but, since some actors may perform a clown without associating with country bumpkins, why may not others play a gentleman, or a hero, without owing much to scholastic education, or to an intimacy with people of fashion, or to an old acquaintance with Mark Antony or Julius Cæsar? A London performer, living with his equals only, may be supposed, although excellent on the stage as a peasant, to have as few ploughmen as peers for his companions.

"The character of Lovel, in the farce of 'High Life below Stairs,' demands the manners both of a gentleman and a rustic; yet this has been well represented by many who have neither moved in

* Miss O'Neill, now Mrs. Becher.

very high, nor very low circles. Feignwell, in Centlivre's 'Bold Stroke for a Wife,' is a field-officer, assuming the various disguises of a beau, a conjuring virtuoso, a Dutch merchant, a superannuated country steward, and a quaker. Woodward, John Palmer, John Bannister, Elliston, and Mathews were all excellent in this part; but they were no more indebted for their celebrity in it, to the schools or to the precepts of the late Lord Chesterfield, than to coxcombs, conjurors, Dutch traders, stewards, or quakers.

"Give a candidate for the stage, who has talent, that sort of schooling which almost all decent parents, even below the rank of gentlemen, afford their children, put Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary into his hands, give him a smattering of French, with a few lessons of fencing and of graceful attitudes and motions from the best masters, and he will have acquired more than several who have been eminent upon the stage, and be nearly as learned and elegant as five out of ten perhaps of the dandies who are to teach him the bon ton of clubs and of fashionable assemblies.

"Whether my readers may coincide with me in these loose thoughts which I have ventured to throw upon paper, time, and perhaps the sages in criticism may show; they are submitted as points to be mooted, and not as opinions in which I presume to pass a definitive judgment:

"How far my departed noble friend, to whom they were addressed, appeared to approve them, may be gathered from the letter here subjoined:

"Upper Berkeley Street,

"My Dear Sir, April 12, 1818.

"I would sooner have told you how much I was pleased and obliged by your observations, but I was in the country, and only received them on my return to town.

"Nothing can be more just, as well as interesting, than the whole of them, which I shall carefully preserve.

Yours most faithfully,

Erskine."

While speaking of Lord Erskine and George Colman, we are reminded of the following jokes. Colman and Bannister were dining one day with Lord Erskine, the ex-Chancellor, who, in the course of conversation on rural affairs, boasted that he kept on his pasture land nearly a thousand sheep. 'I perceive, then,' said Colman, 'your Lordship has still an eye to the Wool-sack.'

An old lady named Wall had been an actress in a subordinate situation many seasons in the Haymarket theatre, for whom Colman from early associations appears to have had a kind consideration. We must all pay the debt of nature, and in due time the old lady died. Somebody from the theatre went to break the intelligence to Colman; who on hearing it, inquired "whether there had been any bills stuck up?" The messenger replied in the negative, and ventured to ask Mr. Colman, why he had put that question? Colman answered, "They generally paste bills on a *Dead Wall:* don't they?"

Colman, himself no giant, was singularly fond of quipping persons of short stature. Liston, and pretty *little* Mrs. Liston, were dining with him, and

towards evening, when preparing to leave their host, Liston said, "Come Mrs. L. let us be going." "Mrs. L (' *ELL,*') indeed," exclaimed Colman, "Mrs. *Inch*, you mean."

One day, speaking of authorship as a profession, Colman said, "It is a very good walking stick, but very bad crutches."

A Mr. Faulkener had been engaged at the Haymarket from a provincial theatre, and appeared in a comedy without producing any great sensation: in fact, Colman was disappointed with his new actor, who had to deliver the following line, which he spoke in a nasal tone,

"Ah! where is my honour, now?"

Colman, who was behind the scenes, took a hasty pinch of snuff, and muttered "I wish *your honour* was back at Newcastle again with all my heart."

Another aspirant for Thespian honours made his debût at the Haymarket theatre, in the character of Octavian, in the Mountaineers. It was discovered very early in the performance that he had undertaken a task for which he was unqualified. Colman was in the green-room, and growing fidgetty, when the new performer came to the line,

"I shall weep soon, and then I shall be better."

"I'll be d——d if you will," said Colman, "if you cry your eyes out!"

Colman published in 1819, another edition of a little volume under the title of 'Broad Grins,' consisting of 'My Night Gown and Slippers,' with additional tales.

The season at the Haymarket did not open until

July 20, 1819, later than usual. This was owing to the Drury Lane company taking refuge there, on the Sub-Committee closing that theatre prematurely. Jones, Liston, Terry, Mrs. Edwin, Mrs. Gibbs, and Mrs. Davenport, were in the company: and a new comedy from the pen of Theodore Hook, under the title of 'Pigeons and Crows,' was received with acclamation.

Colman, we have been told, had got into a habit of sitting up late at night; and was consequently very late in bed in the day-time. On Mr. Theodore Hook calling one afternoon at his house, his name was immediately carried up to Colman, "What's the hour?" "Past three, Sir." "What, does Mr. Hook suppose I rise with the lark? ask him to return at any reasonable hour, and I shall be glad to see him."

In the autumn of 1819, and after the lapse of about *forty-five years*, Mr. Colman made another excursion to Mulgrave, at the invitation of its then possessor. We subjoin his own account of this visit.

"In the first visit, I went thither as a boy with my father; I was in my thirteenth year; my son, Edmund Craven Colman, who accompanied me on my second visit, was in his seventeeth." After a jolting journey, they arrived at their destination; we quote his own words in description.

"Four miles short of the coast in the village of Sleights, we quitted the main road from London, and turned into an improved way to the place of our destination, thus avoiding Whitby, the break-neck *Upgang*, and the subsequent *Syrtis*, flanked by the Ocean and cliffs. This struck me as excellent; for it is according to my poor way of thinking, no

inconsiderable advantage in the bearings upon a country seat, that you may approach it without the risk of being hurled down a precipice, overtaken by the sea, or smothered in a quicksand; but, for the accommodation of all tastes, the ancient route is generously left open to those who may prefer it.

"From Sleights, we had about six miles farther to go, and having accomplished half way, we arrived at one of the Mulgrave Lodges; hence we had a delicious drive by moonlight through those fine woods already mentioned, as having been excluded till we reached the site of the old house; but the house itself had flourished prodigiously during my absence of five-and-forty years, and had absolutely grown into a castle. It had been, in fact, almost completely gutted, heightened, increased with wings, each larger than the primary dwelling: the front reversed and looking towards the sea, the bowling-green bowled off, the old staring stables moved, and the new castellated edifice and woods connected and gracing each other. The late Constantine Lord Mulgrave completed, I believe, this metamorphosis of the mansion, and cut some walks and drives through the woodland scenery, where much has since been effected.

"My stay here at this time was a little more than a fortnight. We had occasional visitors, and the inmates then at the castle were not a small family party; a party which as the reader must have already seen, was very interesting to me. My time passed delightfully, excepting two days, during which I was laid up by Friar Bacon, on whom I had taken a ride

to Whitby. The fat of this handsome pampered animal proclaimed him an old favourite, and the width of his back distended my femoral sinews as if I had been put to the question by the Spanish Inquisition. My kind and noble friend had, I know, been studying my comfort before he mounted me upon this corpulent quadruped, whose ambling pace was smoother than the swing of a cradle, but oh! his rotundity! take him altogether he was one of the mildest tortures that ever stretched the limbs of an elderly gentleman.

"On taking my leave, I scrawled the following doggerel in an Album which is on the table of the library. However worthless the poetry, it contains a 'brief epitome' of the altered state of the place, and of my unalterable feelings.

AN ADDRESS TO THE PRESENT YEAR, EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND NINETEEN.

Written on the 10th of November, on the eve of departure from Mulgrave Castle.

Sweet Eighteen Hundred Ten and Nine,
Who art, like me, on the decline,
I prize thee beyond measure!—
Whate'er my days when thine are past,
I shall remember, to my last,
What store thou brought'st of pleasure.

But listen to the reason why
I hail thee, Annus Domini,
In language so endearing:
Nay, patience!—'tis not much to give,
From full seven weeks Thou hast to live,
A bare five minutes' hearing.

Thy tour above two-thirds was run,
Ere my excursion I begun,
Due north in its direction,
To view, once more, now I am grey,
Scenes where my boyhood loved to stray;
A feast for retrospection!

Snug in the coach's corner placed,
How fondly my "mind's eye" retraced
The spot where I was going;
The house, its door, the bowling-green,
The stables, and the wood scarce seen,
All, all, in memory glowing.

"Yet ah!" sigh'd I, "Fate would not spare
Him who first bade me welcome there,
And touch'd my feelings nearly;
Still there are Brothers, longer known,
With ages closer to my own,
Whom I regard most dearly."

Arrived at length, within those bounds
Where Taste now adds, throughout the grounds,
To nature's rich vagaries,
Cried I, "at Mulgrave, all I see
Has changed, save Mulgrave's Lord to me,—
His kindness never varies."

"The House, a castle grown I find;
Before it, was, before, behind;
The bowling-green has vanish'd;
Stables unstably have retired,
And woods on woods are now admired,
Which, erst, from sight were banish'd.'

The Landscapes of this wide domain,
Tried I in dogg'rel to explain,
To epic length 'twould spin it;
But though the Castle boasts, no doubt,
Such various beauties from without,
Still greater charms are in it:

For there the Noble Owners sit ;
The Host replete with social wit,
The Hostess with good-nature ;
But, named I all who, there, delight,
'Twould only be, in full to write
Their kindred's nomenclature.

Then Eighteen Hundred Ten and Nine,
The joy Thou givest this breast of mine,
All transient joy eclipses ;
My daily thoughts will turn to Thee,
And daily dedicated be
To Friendship, and the Phippses.

Some remarks having been made regarding the farce entitled 'X. Y. Z.' in the continuation of the Biographia Dramatica, about this time, 1820, Colman replied to them by the following angry observations :

"He states under the article X. Y. Z., a farce which I wrote, and produced in Covent Garden, that 'it was alleged in the Court of Chancery, that a contract subsisted between Mr. Colman and the other proprietors of the Haymarket theatre, that Mr. Colman should write only for that House :' the continuator then adds, 'the proprietors of Covent Garden, not knowing of this contract, [observe, he here leaves out the word *alleged,* and assumes the positive existence of such a contract] 'had engaged Mr. Colman to furnish them with a farce ; nor were they served with notice of such contract before they had actually advanced £200. to Mr. Colman, and made preparations for acting the piece.

" If this do not strongly imply (to say the least) that, as a furnisher of farces, I swindled my old and esteemed friends, Messrs. Harris and Co., out of two hundred pounds, then I am utterly ignorant of the English language.

" Now, the simple fact is, that, during a Chancery suit, it was unexpectedly contended on one side, and denied on the other, that I had made such a contract; and the Chancellor laid an injunction upon the farce, *pendente lite*, as is common in similar cases; which injunction was ultimately withdrawn, and the farce declared to belong to the Covent Garden proprietors, at whose theatre it is now acted.

" I beg pardon for this digression: it fell in my way, and I have silently laboured under this terrible article of X. Y. Z. since the year 1812, when the continuator sent me his book as a compliment. He meant me neither injury nor offence; nor do I mean him any; but, worthy man, he has a devil of a knack at 'marring a curious tale in the telling!"

George Colman was appointed to the situation of Lieutenant of His Majesty's Guard of Yeomen of the Guard, on the 13th of May, 1820. The Commission of the Lieutenant, as well as the Exons, is purchased under the authority of an Act of Parliament; but it was given to Colman by George the Fourth, being vacant under peculiar circumstances.

On the first birth-day that Colman attended officially in full costume, His Majesty seemed much pleased to see him, and observed " Your uniform,

George, is so well made, that I don't see the hooks and eyes." On which, Colman, unhooking his coat, said, "Here are my eyes, where are yours?"

Turning round to the Duke of Wellington (who was gold-stick in waiting), the King remarked, "George Colman puts me in mind of Pam:" "If that is the case," exclaimed Colman, "The only difference between the Duke of Wellington and me, is, that I am the Hero of Loo—He, of Waterloo!"

Colman afterwards obtained permission to sell this appointment, which he asked as a matter of favour, not having himself purchased it; and Sir Robert Gill was appointed to succeed Colman as Lieutenant of the Yeomen of the Guard on the 6th of September, 1831.

At the coronation of His Majesty George the Fourth, it was reported that the honour of knighthood had been conferred on George Colman. On this rumour, the following lines were written by John Taylor:

So, Colman has been dubb'd Sir Knight—
The gracious Monarch's boon was right,
The bard deserves it well;
For those who know this bard must know
With loyalty his feelings glow,
As all his efforts tell.

Prince Harry, when he gained the crown,
Cast all his late companions down,
Discarding e'en Old Jack;
Not all his humour could avail,
Not all the prompt facetious tale,
Not all his merry clack.

Unlike the Monarch of the play,
When Princely George gain'd regal sway,
Aloof from churlish pride,
Those who had shared his festive hour,
He kept to profit by his pow'r,
Nor one was thrown aside.

Our Monarch's set, indeed we find
Were comrades of a diff'rent kind
From Hal's unlicensed band,
For men with wit and knowledge stor'd
Partook of George's princely board,
Men, who adorn the land.

Hence Colman, just as ready, gay,
As Falstaff in each matchless play,
With all his sportive vein,
Falstaff in head, but not in heart,
May well, without mean courtly art,
His Sovereign's smile retain.

But let not e'en that Sovereign's smile
Thee Colman, from the Muse beguile,
And make thee slight her praise;
For justice, gratitude, must own,
She gave thee a Parnassian throne,
And crown'd thee with her bays.

We here resume Colman's own narrative of some passages in his life:

"I have heretofore treated of 'Two Parsons,' when I gave the reins to my curvetting Muse, in her poetical Vagaries, but the present incidents are of a different description; and end, although they begin gaily, in a 'Story of Woe.'

"The Reverend Robert Lowth, son of the venerable and learned Dr. Lowth, the deceased Bishop of London (whose English Grammar is one of the standard

books in our philology), received the rudiments of his classical education, I believe, at Winchester School; and was one among a few contemporaries in whose society I most delighted, while at Christ Church.

"From the period of my quitting the Oxford University in 1781, till 1822, a considerable lapse of time, and on my part, as far as it concerned my regard for Lowth, *hiatus valdè deflendus*, I had no communication with him personal or epistolary. In the last-mentioned year, however, he called at my house, and on returning home to dinner, one day, after a walk, I found the following letter from him; he had written it in my absence, and left it on my table. Its unaffected and lively style proves that age had not altered the good nature, nor impaired the pleasantry, which formerly made him so popular and beloved among the junior members of our college.

"DEAR COLMAN, August 16th, 1822.

"It may be some five-and-thirty years since we met,* and I believe as near forty years as may be, since I was promoted from my garret, No. 3, Peckwater, into your ci-devant rooms in the Old Quad: on which occasion I bought your things.† Of all your household furniture, I possess but one article, which I removed with myself to my first house and Castle

* My friend was here in error:—we had not met for nearly one-and-forty years.

† This purchase was called *Thirds*, and always at the same price, the buyer paying two-thirds of the money which it had cost the preceding tenant of the rooms for each article of furniture, &c.

in Essex, as a very befitting parsonage sideboard, *viz.* a mahogany table with two side drawers, and which still 'does the State some service,' though not of plate. But I have an article of your's on a smaller scale, a certain little flat mahogany box, furnished, partially I should say, with cakes of paint, which probably you overlooked or undervalued as a vade-mecum, and left. And, as an exemplification of the great vanity of over-anxious care, and the safe preservation, per contra, in which an article may possibly be found, without any care at all, that paint-box is still *in statu quo*, at this present writing; having run the gauntlet not merely of my bachelor days, but of the practical cruelties of my thirteen children, all alive and merry, thank God! albeit as unused, and as little disposed to preserve their own playthings or chattels from damage as children usually are, yet it survives! 'The reason why I cannot tell,' unless 'I kept it for the dangers it has passed.'

"Though I have been well acquainted with you publicly, nearly ever since our Christ-Church days, our habits, pursuits, and callings, having cast us into different countries and tracts, we have not, I think, met since the date I speak of. I have a house at Chiswick, where I rather think this nine-lived box is: and whether it is or no, I shall be very glad if you will give me a call to dine and take a bed if convenient to you; and, if I cannot introduce you to your old acquaintance and recollections, I shall have great pleasure in substituting new ones, Mrs. Lowth, and eleven of our baker's dozen of olive branches, our present complement in the house department; my eldest boy being in the West Indies, and my third having returned to the Military College last Saturday, his vacation furlough having expired. As the summer begins to borrow now and then an autumn evening, the sooner you will favour me with your company, the surer you will be of finding me at Grove House; the expiration of other holidays being the usual signal for weighing anchor and shifting our moorings to

parsonage point. I remember you, or David Curzon,* had among your phrases quondam, one, of anything being 'd—d summerly;' I trust however having since tasted the delights of 'the sweet shady side of Pall Mall,†' that you have worn out that prejudice, and will still catch the season before it flies us. Or give me a line naming a no distant day, that I may not be elsewhere when you call; and you will much oblige,

Yours sincerely,
ROBERT LOWTH."

N. B.—In your address to me, you must not name *Chiswick*, but Grove House,‡ Turnham Green, as otherwise it

* "Another clergyman and early college friend, whom I have seen but once since I left Oxford, and that was about four years after I had quitted it. I am happy to hear that he is still alive; he is a younger son of the late Lord Scarsdale, and resides, I am told, chiefly in Derbyshire."—G. C.

† Colman was then living in Pall-Mall.—ED.

‡ "This is the villa which, if I am not mistaken, formerly belonged to the well-known Humphrey Morris, a gentleman of large fortune, and thought to be, for more reasons than one, a very peculiar person. I remember seeing this place, and the then master of it, one morning, when I was a boy, by riding thither with a relation, a lawyer, who went there upon business. On entering the Court-yard, we were assailed by a very numerous pack of curs in full cry. This was occasioned by Mr. Morris's humanity towards animals: All the stray mongrels, which happened to follow him in London, he sent down to this villa, where they were petted, and pampered. He had a mare in his stables called *Curious*, who though attended and fed with the greatest care, was almost a skeleton from old age, being turned of thirty. Many of his horses enjoyed a luxurious sinecure. During summer, they were turned into his park, or rather paddock, at Chiswick, where in sultry weather they reposed beneath the shade of the trees, while a boy was employed to flap the flies from their hides. The honours shown by Mr. Morris to his beasts of burden were only inferior to those which Caligula lavished on his charger."—G. C.

goes into another postman's walk, who walks it back again to the office, and it does not reach me per Turnham Green peripatetic till the next day, which is *toute autre chose*."

"Had a man been 'bearing fardels' for half a century, till his jaundiced mind could perceive nothing in this world but 'envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness,' such a kindly letter as the foregoing might present an antidote to his misanthropy, and bring back his affections to his fellows.

"I answered it immediately, telling my old friend how much he had gratified me, and how happy I should be in attending him, on any early day most convenient to himself; when he would perceive, no doubt, that I had not worn so well as my quondam table, his first parsonage sideboard; and that I was more damaged than the little paint-box, by the wear and tear which 'flesh,' less tough than mahogany, 'is heir to.'

"After refreshing my friend's memory, by touching on some particulars, which have already been mentioned, I informed him that I was, of late years, in the habit of suburban rustification; and that I passed a considerable part of my summers in a house where I was intimate at Fulham; whither I desired him to direct to me, as much nearer Chiswick than my own abode, being within a few hundred yards of his old family residence, where we last parted. Whenever I was at this place, I told him the avenue, and Bishop's walk, by the river side, the public precincts of the moated episcopal domain, had become my favourite morning and evening

lounge. I told him, indeed, merely the fact, omitting all commentary attached to it; for often had I then, and oftener have I since, in a solitary stroll down the avenue, thought of him, regretting the wide chasm in our intercourse, and musing upon human events. I have no copy of my own letter, which was written in the 'flow of soul,' and at the impulse of the moment.

"In a few days after his first letter, and my answer to it, I heard from him again, as follows:

"Grove House, Chiswick, Saturday 9 a. m.

"DEAR COLMAN, August 17th.

"'*Surgere diluculo saluberrimum est,*' but all general rules having their exceptions, so in my case of turning out on Wednesday morning. On seeing, from my up-two-pair-of-stairs bedroom, two active citizens in full march for a grove of Orleans Plum-trees at the bottom of the park, I forthwith added my grey camlet jacket and trousers to my flannel drawers and waistcoat, and finding my active citizen gardener already up, we soon reached the scene of action; but alas! not only were the birds flown, but my plums were diminished, though not twenty minutes from the skirmishers' forced march. So, being up, a most cogent argument, I thought I could not do better than work my passage back by a different route, which lay through an ozier bed to the river, glittering with all the gems of pearly dew, through which, being some acres of ground, I of course, got my feet as wet as heart could wish. To cut the story short, by changing cold water, or rather water-drenched worsted, for a hot foot-tub, and ditto bason of tea, I thought to bully the thing off, but it was not so to be bullied by a middle-aged gentleman; so, after dinner, I retired up stairs to bed; and to make some amends for my *diluculo* expedition, have never been

down stairs since. Having no personal interest with the dinner-bell, and living *à la Sangrado*, has so reduced my strength, that I dread the journey up and down again.

"But for this '*inter poculum et labra*,' it was my intention to have made you my first *poste restante*, with perhaps a walk down the old avenue, in my way to town, that identical day; and still hoping to accomplish three miles and back, I have hoped from day to day; but I cannot get in travelling condition, even for so short a journey. Therefore I hope you will send me word by my new Yorkshire groom lad, that you will take pot-luck with me, on Sunday, as the most likely day for you to suburbize. You will meet nobody but ourselves, and perhaps Lord Oxford, who having been laid up this week past, may not be able to come then.

"No time for this sheet, as the carriage is at the door, behind which Yorkshire is to have a cast to Hammersmith pump, whence he foots it to you, and returns with your answer forthwith; but should you not be at Fulham Lodge, I have desired that this may be forwarded to you by the first Twopenny, in hopes of its still reaching you in time for Sunday, at six or half-past six o'clock dinner.

"Thank God, as I often have, that I am not 'set on a pinnacle, to cast myself down,' as poor Lord Londonderry has done!* on which subject, *nunc, et semper, prescribere longum est.*

Yours, Dear Colman, very truly,

Robert Lowth."

"From the playfulness of this letter, continued through three pages, it then appeared to me that my

* The deplorable death of the Marquess of Londonderry, Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, had recently occurred.

friend had been labouring under no very formidable, though an acute attack, brought on by accident; and that four-and-twenty hours more rest would considerably advance his convalescence; I therefore answered, that I anticipated great pleasure from dining with him. But I have since had reason, melancholy reason, to reflect, that while giving this cheerful account of himself, he was still in bed, at least in his bed room, 'reduced in strength, and 'dreading the journey down stairs, and up again;' that this was inconsistent with his inviting me to dinner on the Sunday, the very next day; and that he was much too sanguine, and perhaps fevered in no trifling degree, when he wrote to me.

"Early next morning, his daughter, (his eldest, I believe,) Miss F. Lowth, favoured me with a few lines, which I omit, from fear of displeasing a young lady by publishing her note, which would, however, be very pleasing to others; for there are traits in it so amiably feminine, so unconsciously indicative of a good heart, and of daughterly love, that it would do honour to her if I published it; as it would to her mother, who, in a moment of alarm, was particularly anxious, as it appears by the note, to show marked attention to one whom her husband regarded.

"My partial friend had, I conjecture, told his family that he should feel pleasure in receiving the companion of his youth, and they were all prepared to welcome me with more than common kindness; a sure proof of their domestic concord and affection.

"Miss Lowth's letter informed me, that her father,

since the foregoing day, had become extremely unwell, that bleeding and cupping had been prescribed, the most perfect quiet enjoined; and that, of course, our proposed party must be deferred. This was sent to me without his knowledge, he was too ill to be disturbed about such trifles as the postponement of a dinner, or to be talked to upon any subject whatever.

" I began now to be seriously apprehensive for him, and the '*inter poculum et labra*,' which he had so sportively quoted, only the day before, came over my mind like the raven's croak upon the ear of superstition.

" On the following day, my son rode to Grove House, at my desire, to make inquiries. The family seemed in some confusion, for he rang repeatedly at the gate, which was at last opened by an elderly female, from whom he understood that her master was no more! but her account, it seems, was given in a hurried manner, and was so perplexed and equivocal, that I still flattered my wishes, and would not believe the very worst. For two days afterwards I remained, therefore, in suspense. On the third, I received the following most painful confirmation of all my fears.

" The Grove, Chiswick, August 22, 1822.

" Sir,

" I am requested by Mrs. Lowth to apprise you, should you not already have heard, of the decease of Mr. Lowth, which took place on Sunday evening. He became much worse on the Sunday morning, and his constitution being unable to bear the necessary depletion, he sunk in the

evening, at eight o'clock. The suddenness and severity of the blow must plead her apology for not giving you earlier information of the distressing event*. His remains are to be interred in the family vault at Fulham, on Monday morning, at ten o'clock.

I am, Sir, your most obedient,
J. C. Badeley."†

"It would be difficult to describe my emotion, when reading the foregoing letter. Seldom have I felt the trite ethics on the fragility of human hopes, the evanescence of life's joys, and of life itself, more bitterly illustrated than by this affecting occurrence.

"A fortnight had not gone by, since in the enjoyment of health, and gaiety of spirit, he had sought me out, to court a renewal of our intimacy; and on the evening of the very day appointed for our meeting, after one-and-forty years of separation, nay, at the very hour when I had pictured to myself our sitting at his hospitable board, with his wife, and his 'eleven olive branches,' smiling around us, listening to our talk of former times, and happy to see us happy; even at that impending hour of social reason's happiness, did the awful decrees of Heaven snatch him from friendship, from domestic love, and from this world for ever!

* "I have never had the honour of being introduced to Mrs. Lowth, but meaned to have paid my respects to her, in due time, after this sad event. I have since considered, that, under all the combined circumstances, our interview would uselessly excite the most afflictive recollections, and, therefore, abandoned my intention."

† Doctor Badeley of Half-Moon Street, a Fellow and Censor of the Royal College of Physicians.

" I continued at Fulham Lodge, which is nearer, in a direct line, to the Church, than to the Bishop's Palace, and the ' old avenue.' On Monday, the adjacent steeple gave early notice of the approaching funeral; religion and sorrow mingled within me, while the slow and mournful tolling of the bell smote upon my heart. Selfish feelings, too, though secondary, might now and then obtrude, for they are implanted in our nature. My departed friend was about my own age; we had entered the field nearly at the same time; we had fought, indeed, our chief battles asunder, but in our younger days, he had been my comrade, close to me in the ranks; he had fallen, and my own turn might speedily follow.

" My walk next morning, was to the sepulchre of the Lowths, to indulge in the mournful satisfaction of viewing the depository of my poor friend's remains. It stands in the church-yard, a few paces from the eastern end of the ancient Church at Fulham. The surrounding earth, trampled by recent footsteps, and a slab of marble which had been evidently taken out, and replaced, in the side of the tomb, too plainly presented traces of those rites which had been performed on the previous day.

" For several mornings, I repeated my walk thither; and no summer has since glided away, except the last, when my sojournment at Fulham was suspended, without my visiting the spot, and heaving a sigh to the memory of Robert Lowth !"

CHAPTER XIII.

1822—1836.

Extensive alteration of Drury Lane Theatre—Samuel Beazley—Opening Address by Colman—Colman appointed Examiner of Plays—Definition of the term 'Burletta'—The Duke of Montrose—Sir William Knighton—Shiel's Alasco—Kelly's Reminiscences—Humane Letter of George the Fourth—The Bishop of Chichester and aged O'Keefe—Bish—Stephen Price—The Haunted Inn—The Duke of York—Illness of Colman—Letters to Edmund Byng—Colman's Receipts—The Property Club—Theodore Hook—Arnold's Remarks on Colman—Kemble—Boaden—John Taylor—Woodfall—Colman's last moments.

The interior of Drury Lane Theatre, under the management of Elliston in 1822, was almost demolished, and within the short space of sixty days, was reconstructed, a most extraordinary achievement, and which seemed like the work of a magician.

This alteration was effected by Mr. Beazley, the architect of many theatres* : but the interior of the new-modelled Drury exceeds every other in elegance, although its size is too large to enable the major part of the audience to enjoy the performances. The opening pieces were Sheridan's School for Scandal, and O'Keefe's Poor Soldier, when, after the company had presented themselves, and sung the national anthem, Terry, who made his first appearance at that theatre on that night as Sir Peter Teazle, came forward, and delivered the following address written by Colman :

* The first English Opera House, which was burnt in 1830, the present English Opera House, the Theatres Royal Dublin and Birmingham, the St. James's Theatre, were all built by Mr. Beazley, and he has been concerned in the improvements and decorations of most of the metropolitan places of amusement.

Since theatres so oft, in this, our time,
Are launch'd upon the town, with solemn rhyme,
Thoughts ready-made, to fit the theme, are found,
Like last year's tunes on barrel-organs ground;
And poets furbish, in the bathos style,
Old tropes and figures for the new-built pile.
The Sock and Buskin named—the Muses follow;
The opera—always prefaced with Apollo.
But, Architecture's claims when we enforce,
Vitruvius and Palladio come of course;
'Till after a long dance through Greece and Rome,
To Dryden, Otway, Congreve, getting home,
We end with Shakspeare's ghost, still hov'ring on our dome!
Alas! how vainly will our modern fry
Strive with the old *Leviathans* to vie!
How foolishly comparison provoke,
With lines that Johnson writ, and Garrick spoke.
Abandon we a strain without more fuss,
Which, when attempted, has abandoned us;
And let us guiltless be, however dull,
Of murdering the "sublime and beautiful."
Thus, then,—our Manager, who scouts the fears
Of pulling an Old House about his ears,
Has spared, of our late Edifice's pride,
The outward walls—and little else beside;
Anxious has been *that* labour to complete,
Which makes *magnificence* and *comfort* meet;
Anxious that multitudes may sit at ease,
And scantier numbers in no desert freeze;
That ample space may mark the liberal plan,
But never strain the eyes or ears *of man*.
Look round and judge;—his efforts all are waste,
Unless you stamp them as a work of taste;
Nor blame him for transporting from his floors
Those old offenders here—the two stage doors—
Doors which have, oft', with burnish'd panels stood,
And golden knockers, glitt'ring in a wood;
Which on their posts, through every change remained,
Fast as Bray's Vicar, whosoever reign'd;
That served for Palace, Cottage, Street, or Hall—
Used for each place, and out of place in all;
Station'd, like watchmen, who in lamp-light sit,
For all the business of the night unfit.

So much for visual sense:—what follows next
Is chiefly on the Histrionic text:—
And our Adventurer has toiled to store
His list of Favourites, with some Favourites more—
Sought planets roving from their former sphere,
And fix'd, as stars, the brilliant wanderers here;
To Drury's luminaries *added* light,
And made his sky with constellations bright.
Rich the repast,—and may, we trust, ensure
The custom of the scenic epicure?
E'en I, although among the last and least,
May pass, perhaps, as garnish to the feast.

As for our living dramatists,—if now
The genuine bays disdain to deck their brow,
Still they can please; and, as they're dull or clever,
You patronize, or damn, the same as ever;
For each degree of talent, after all,
Must *here*, by your decision, rise or fall.

In October 1823, a new interlude was produced at Drury-lane Theatre, with a very bad title, 'Stella and Leatherlungs.' We believe it to have been a hasty production of George Colman, and was written at the earnest desire of Elliston, to exhibit the extraordinary precocious powers of Clara Fisher.

On the 19th of January, 1824, Colman was appointed "Examiner of all Plays, Tragedies, Comedies, Operas, Farces, Interludes, or any other entertainment of the stage, of what denomination soever," in the room of John Larpent*, Esq. deceased; a very proper appointment, for no one was better acquainted

* Mr. Larpent, who had for some years held the post of Reader to the Lord Chamberlain's department, was a strict Methodist. After his death, the numerous Manuscripts of Dramas, which ought to have been kept in the archives of the Chamberlain's Office, were exposed to public sale!

N.B.—Two guineas had been paid to the Licenser, for every piece, song, &c.

with the state of the drama than Colman. When Colman took office, there happened to be a strong contest between the major and the minor theatres; and as several of the latter performed regular dramas under the general title of burlettas, the licenser was somewhat puzzled. We however give the definition of burletta in Colman's own words. He alludes first to some burlettas performed under the direction of Dr. Arnold at Mary-le-bone Gardens:

"My father, who was a friend to the Doctor, allowed him to act a Burletta there, called 'The Portrait,' which he (my father) had taken from the *Tableau Parlant* of the French. This piece was received in its day for what it professed to be, that is, for a burletta; there was no doubt then of what it was: but ask now, what is a burletta, and you will be told it is one thing at one theatre, and another at another. This disagreement arises from the Minor theatres, which are restricted in the nature of their entertainments, having made it, *gradatim*, a different kind of drama from what it was when first performed in this country, and thereby it is contended, by the managers of the great theatres, that they go beyond the limits of their general licence. The clashing interests, therefore, of the greats and smalls, under the jurisdiction of the Lord Chamberlain, occasioned this affair, among others, to be canvassed before the Privy Council; who called in the Crown lawyers on the subject; and the Crown and other lawyers, after investigating the question of 'what is a burletta?' solved it much after the manner of the respondents to Scrub in The Beaux Stratagem, 'their answer was, they

could not tell;' and they, the lawyers, replied, they knew nothing of the matter.

"Thus a point, once thought easy, was plunged into difficulty, and thus do people grow wiser and wiser every day, till at last they acquire the sapience of that ancient philosopher, who was candid enough to say, 'all I know is, that I know nothing.' I had imagined that, in a case like this, the lawyers might have formed an opinion upon the evidence of veterans of the stage, who could tell what was considered to be a burletta in earlier days, and have allowed weight to old precedent and custom, in deficiency of a minute definition, and of a positive law; but here I was mistaken, and such veterans never were interrogated.

"For my own part, the rooted notions of an old theatrical stager make it difficult for me to consider a burletta otherwise than as a drama in rhyme, and which is entirely musical; a short comic piece, consisting of recitative and singing, wholly accompanied, more or less, by the Orchestra. The most conspicuous burlettas are 'Midas,' 'The Golden Pippin,' 'Poor Vulcan,' 'The Portrait,' and perhaps a few others. All these come under the description of rhyme, recitative, and vocal and instrumental music, with nothing spoken; the only exception which I have observed, is Tom Thumb, altered from Fielding's burlesque tragedy, with the addition of songs. In this piece there is partly dialogue without music; and I have been recently informed from good authority, that it was inadvertently announced by the managers of Covent Garden theatre (who thus produced it) as a burletta, and that they

repent of having afforded this precedent, and a greater argument for latitude to their minor rivals. That the minor theatres supposed a burletta to be what I conceive it, is pretty evident from their practice, since they were allowed to exhibit this kind of entertainment. They first performed it according to the definition I have just given. They then made their recitative appear like Prose, by the actor running one line into another, and slurring over the rhyme; soon after, a harpsichord was touched now and then, as an accompaniment to the actor; sometimes once in a minute; then once in five minutes; at last, not at all; till in the process of time, musical and rhyming dialogue has been abandoned; and a burletta now, if it be one, is certainly an old friend with quite a new face. Much of the perplexity has been created by the term itself being a coinage (evidently from the Italian), and we have therefore no decided definition of it, from any authority. Johnson has not the word in his Dictionary, but he has burlesque, which he derives from the Italian *burláre*, to jest; and define it as jocular, tending to raise laughter by unnatural or unsuitable language or images. Neither does the word find a place in Baretti's Italian and English Dictionary. Baretti however has *burla*, a jest and banter; *burlare*, to laugh at, to banter; *burlatore*, a banterer; *burlesco, burlevole*, facetious, merry, comical. The silence of lexicographers on one hand, and the nonplus of lawyers on the other, put the Lord Chamberlain of the day in a dilemma; but as burlettas had been allowed in the first instance to the minor theatres, and as he could not obtain any proof, or

professional opinion that the performances in question were not burlettas, he continued to license them. His successor, His Grace the Duke of Montrose, modified this matter, which was done to his hand, by granting licences for what is 'called by the Manager, a burletta;' and, providing it be in legal acceptance a burletta."*

The following letter was addressed by Colman to Sir William Knighton.

"5, Melina Place, Westminster Road,
29th February, 1824.

"Mr. Colman presents his compliments to Sir William Knighton, and is much gratified by Sir William having expressed a wish to see his short remarks on 'Alasco,' a copy of which he has now the pleasure to enclose.

"Although the ferment of the times has greatly subsided, still plays which are built upon conspiracies, and attempts to revolutionize a state, stand upon ticklish ground; and the proposed performance of such plays is to be contemplated with more jealousy when they pourtray the disaffected as gallant heroes and hapless lovers. Thus drawn, *ad captandum vulgus*, their showy qualities and tender distresses of the heart throw a dazzle and an interest round their sedition, while they preach up the doctrine that government is tyranny, that revolt is virtue, and that rebels are the righteous.

"'Alasco,' in the tragedy of the same name, is a character of the above description, and Walsingham is set up against him as a contrast. Whenever these two gentlemen meet

* 'Providing it be in legal acceptance a burletta.' What a judgment for a Lord Chamberlain! In other words, 'I will license a tragedy, comedy, play, opera, or farce, as a burletta, provided you so call it; and leave you to defend your right against any injured or supposed injured party, who may choose to risk the hazard of the expense of a legal investigation, or, what is worse, of being hooted or pointed at as an informer.'

there is an effusion of clap-trap sentiments between them, in the alternate support of loyalty and radicalism; and they *prône* in a *pro* and *con* dialogue, vying with each other, speech for speech, by turns, like a couple of contending swains in an eclogue. In respect to their good and evil influence over an audience they are the Messieurs Bane and Antidote of the tragedy; and from a tragedy that needs so much counter-poison, for the chance only of neutralizing its arsenic, the deducement to be made as to its dangerous tendency is very obvious.

"It is my opinion that the objections against acting this play may be removed by the erasures which I have made; in which, should the managers think proper to acquiesce, I will (on their altering the MS. and again placing it in my hands) submit the play to the Lord Chamberlain for his licence.

GEORGE COLMAN."

"February 1824.

"The foregoing summary remarks were written by me, as Examiner of Plays; and I communicated them to Mr. Charles Kemble, one of the managers of Covent Garden Theatre, when the tragedy of 'Alasco' was under my official consideration. G. C."

Colman's object in forwarding the above criticism to Sir William Knighton is evident; he wished it to meet the eye of his Royal Master, and doubtless his desire was fulfilled. The tragedy of 'Alasco' was not the best of Sheil's productions.

When Michael Kelly was about the publication of his Memoirs, he was anxious to dedicate the work to the King (George the Fourth), and begged of Colman to solicit his Majesty's permission to do so. Colman accordingly addressed the annexed letter to Sir William Knighton.

"DEAR SIR WILLIAM, "2nd December, 1824.

"I was told yesterday at Carlton House, where I called in hopes of the pleasure of seeing you, that you were in the country, and that the time of your return to town was uncertain. I therefore direct this and the accompanying packet to Hanover-square, wishing it may reach you soon, as it will be seen by Kelly's letter enclosed, that expedition is desirable, on account of treating with the bookseller, which treaty I will endeavour to postpone till you are kind enough to let me hear from you. I saw Kelly immediately after I left you, and told him that my own impulse induced me to caution him on the business in question. He appears to me loyal even to enthusiasm; and in common with all those of right feeling, who have the honour and happiness to experience the kind-hearted consideration of our Gracious Master, most gratefully attached. He told me that he would, at my desire, send me copies of everything he proposed publishing relative to the King, and would abide by my opinion as to alterations, omissions, &c. In consequence I have received from him the papers which I now forward to you, and will thank you for your sentiments upon them at your earliest convenience.

"Kelly is extremely anxious to dedicate his book to the King, and as Irishmen are always making blunders, he speculates upon obtaining his wish through so poor a channel as myself. I have promised him to use any little interest I may possess among the higher powers to get this wish, or rather, humble petition, submitted to His Majesty; and if Sir William Knighton desires to know the person whom I would solicit on this subject, I say unto him, as Nathan said unto David, 'Thou art the man!' always provided, however, that such solicitation be not improper.

Believe me,
Dear Sir William,
With sincere esteem,
Most faithfully yours,
G. COLMAN."

" P. S.—As none of the contents of the diary mentioned in Kelly's letter are to be published, (except one article about a child called 'Julia,' which is in the paper now forwarded,) I do not transmit the said diary; indeed I am pledged to return it on this day.

The following letter from George the Fourth to Sir William Knighton demonstrates His Majesty's kindness of heart, and his recollection of his companions in early days. It is dated January 1826.

" A little charitable impulse induces me to desire you to inquire into the distressed circumstances of poor old O'Keefe, now ninety years of age, and stone blind, whom I knew a little of formerly, having occasionally met him at parties of my juvenile recreation and hilarity to which he then contributed not a little. Should you really find him so low in the world, and so divested of all comfort, as he is represented to be, then I conceive that there can be no objection to your offering him, from me, such immediate relief, or such a moderate annual stipend, as will enable him to close his hitherto long life in comfort, at any rate free from want and absolute beggary, which I greatly fear at present is but too truly his actual condition and situation.

" Perhaps on many accounts and reasons, which I am sure I need not mention to you, this had best be effectuated by an immediate application through you to our lively little friend George Colman, whose good heart will, I am certain, lead him to give us all the assistance he can, especially as it is for the preservation of one of his oldest invalided brothers and worshippers of the Thespian Muse.

G. R."

In reference to this subject, we here subjoin a letter from the Bishop of Chichester to Sir William Knighton.

"Chichester, Jan. 22, 1826.

"My Dear Sir William,

"The instant our service was over this morning, I hastened to communicate to poor O'Keefe the gratifying intelligence of His Majesty's bounty towards him. I cannot describe the gratitude and feeling with which he endeavoured to utter the language of his heart at so unlooked-for a mark of royal beneficence, nor can I adequately speak of the fervour he evinced in blessing his benefactor.

"With a truly honourable feeling, however, he desired me to communicate to you, for the information of His Majesty, that, in the year 1808, a pension was granted him by the Lords of the Treasury, of one hundred pounds per annum, which he still enjoys; and he stated that he had twenty-seven pounds a-year more, which he had been enabled to purchase in the funds from the produce of a benefit at one of the theatres a few years since. His Majesty's bounty, he added, would enable him to lay up a little store for an only daughter, who has been the solace and comfort of his declining years; but he almost doubted whether he could venture to hope it might be continued when his circumstances were known.

"The daughter, who is about fifty, is a most amiable and exemplary person. She devotes her whole time to her father, who is now in his eightieth year, and quite blind. You may probably remember a work published some years since, called 'Patriarchal Times,' of which she was the authoress. It was at the time universally read and admired.

"O'Keefe resides in a very small house in the suburbs of the city, which he and his daughter have occupied for eleven years; they are much respected and esteemed.

"Believe me, my Dear Sir William,
Yours very faithfully,
R. J. Chichester."

The following letter was addressed by Colman to Mr. Beazley on the subject of a comedy written by him, which was submitted to Colman as licenser:

"Sir, 28th April, 1829.

"I am sorry to be still under the necessity of trespassing on your patience till Tuesday next, when you may be assured that I will be explicit on the subject of your comedy. Believe me this delay in transmitting to you my opinion, arises from no false delicacy in communicating it; for, however contrary my sentiments may sometimes prove to the wishes of an author, it is my duty to deliver them candidly; and my rejection or reception of a play is a managerial matter of business. Some dry proceedings of the law, however, at present take up almost the whole of my time, and oblige me to ask your indulgence 'till the day above mentioned.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

G. Colman."

Colman wrote the subjoined letter to Mr. Yates on the same subject.

"My Dear Yates, Brompton, 27th April, 1829.

"I hear that Beazley complains I have reduced all his full grown angels into cherubims, *id est*, cut them in half, and left them neither heaven or cloud to rest upon; that his comedy will be sure to be d—d by the public, owing to the removal of some devilish good jokes by the Examiner; and further, that the Licenser's Deputy has taken most unlicensed liberties with the dramatist.

"Cannot you, my dear Fred. instruct him better? The play, you know, must be printed in strict accordance with my obliterations; but if the parts be previously given out, it will be difficult to induce the actors to preach from my text.

Truly yours,

G. Colman."

By this letter to Mr. Yates, it would appear, that although Colman felt compelled to eradicate such passages as he deemed improper for the stage, yet he ingeniously opens the door for the retention of the expunged matter. The reponsibility, be it remembered, however, was then removed from his own shoulders. This was not the only instance wherein this remedy was recommended by him.

The editor has some gratification and perhaps more vanity, in transcribing the following short note, commendatory of one of his own theatrical productions, from so celebrated a comic author as George Colman.

" June 26, 1828, Brompton Square.

" My Dear Sir,

" From the clever way in which the story is conducted, and the scenes of humour mixed with the horrors, I set down the 'Bottle Imp' as your production, and I hope, heartily hope, and think it will prove a strong hit.

" I would advise (but not as an Examiner) the omission of only one line.

Very truly yours,

George Colman."

Hackett, the American comedian, had been engaged by Mr. Bunn at Drury Lane Theatre. Being in want of a *new* part, he, or some one for him, had made an alteration in Colman's comedy of 'Who wants a Guinea?' substituting a character, Solomon Swap, for the original Solomon Gundy. As a matter of course this precious transatlantic amalgamation had to undergo the inspection of the Examiner of Plays, this examiner being the author of the comedy!

Here was a situation! Colman thus addressed Bunn, the ostensible manager, on the subject:

"Sir,

"In respect to the alterations made by Mr. *Hackett*, a most appropriate name on the present occasion, were the established play of any living dramatist, except myself, so mutilated, I should express to the Lord Chamberlain the grossness and unfairness of the manager who encouraged such a proceeding; but as the character of Solomon Gundy was originally a part of my own writing, I shall request his Grace to license '*the rubbish*' as you call it, which you have sent me.

Your obedient Servant,

G. Colman."

Colman was for many years honoured with the friendship of his royal highness the Duke of York. On the lamented death of the Duke, Colman thus wrote: "A recurrence to that event has casually presented itself here. I cannot turn periods upon it, and my pen must flow as my feelings dictate. Presumptive heir to the Crown, the nearest wish to the heart of the good Duke of York was the honour, the prosperity, and protracted life of our excellent Monarch: no brother could be more affectionate, no subject more faithful, no citizen more truly constitutional. His impulses were as kind and generous as ever glowed in a human breast: and his combined loyalty and patriotism were the result of sound sense, experience, and integrity.

"His admirable military discipline was marked by the veneration of the army, and his name will be

transmitted to posterity, under the emphatic appellation of *The Soldier's Friend.* His extensive support of Charitable Establishments was unavoidably conspicuous, but he hated ostentation; and his secret relief of distress exceeded his public contributions. In politics, as his bosom was without guile, he uttered his principles without reserve; and his firm, ingenuous character obtained, not merely the boisterous acclamations of the multitude, but the permanent esteem of all classes of Englishmen, who have an interest involved in our general welfare. In private life his manners were most amiable; too noble-minded to be vain of his exalted rank, too dignified to undervalue it, he was princely without pride, and familiar without derogation; hence it came, that those who had the happiness to associate with him, felt no restraint in his presence, but never lost sight of their respect; and all who knew him intimately, became steadily attached to him.

"Professions of acute grief from humble men, for the loss of princes, are suspected of hypocrisy; I shall not, therefore, attempt to describe my emotions, while I am offering this lowly tribute to the memory of my dear Illustrious Patron; whose goodness to me could only be surpassed by His Majesty's gracious beneficence."

Colman suffered greatly during the latter years of his life from repeated attacks of gout. The following letters, however, addressed by him to his friend, the Hon. Edmund Byng, prove that he would not permit the disorder to interfere with the pleasantry of his pen.

" April 10, 1823.

" Your letter reached me on the 2nd, while labouring under a furious attack of the gout, and between pain and some little business, I have been unable to send you a line sooner. This same gout comes like a bully and a coward; assaulting us more as we grow older and are less able to resist him; but I had no need of such a mandate of my own mortality, to excite my sincere sorrow for the declining state of poor Lady Torrington. Recollections of the many happy days I have passed with her and your excellent father, for both of whom I had the greatest regard and respect, are among those 'pleasures of memory' which are most dear to me. Dear, however, as such pleasures are, there is a tinge of melancholy in them."

" My Dear Edmund, 16th June, 1823.

" Heaven grant that your talking of Mother Carey's Chickens may not be ominous! for they are birds of evil prognostick to us sea-faring-men: and I am press'd on board a ship; must sleep at Gravesend (an ill-boding name for a town) on Wednesday, and be at the Nore on Thursday next. Pray for me! my life is insured, but I cannot swim. After my return, if so the Fates permit, let us meet, here, or wherever you will.

Ever yours, G. C."

" My Dear Edmund, 18th November, 1823.

" Under the head of Praise-worthy Projects frustrated, please to set down my starting for Fulham on Sunday, too late to call on you in my way thither, as I intended. Many thanks for your letter, and the enclosed portrait, which I had seen before in the Percy Anecdotes, with the *facetiæ* that belong to it. I hope and trust that you, and all friends whom it may concern, pronounce the jokes to be as unlike me as the features.

" At this critical moment, we are unequal to offering you a mutton-chop, being in the horrors of setting the house *to rights*, as good house-wives call it. Our cabin has been so much deranged, literally from top to bottom, that we are obliged to open the drains and rebuild the chimneys, which the high winds had almost blown away.

" No comedy this year! I will tell you why (giving you a full, true, and particular account of this, another *frustration*) when we meet.

Ever, affectionately, yours, G. C."

" My Dear Byng,

" I lament that the ' Law of Java' should be so imperative upon me, as to deprive me of the pleasure of attending you.

" The King commands its representation on Friday next; I shall, therefore, be in requisition both as bard and beef-eater.

Ever, truly, yours, G. C."

" My Dear Byng, " Melina Place.

" I have been disabled, till to-day, from thanking you for your very kind letter, by a compound of corporal ills, which is now so far simplified that I have *only* gout in one leg, and erysipelas in the other.

" Although I am extremely weak in body, your friendly hospitalities would be strengtheners of too much force for me at present—to say nothing of my being obliged, lame as I now am, to take the little food I can swallow in a reclined posture *more Romano*. There is no one whom I more willingly attend as mine host than yourself, both on the score of immediate pleasure and sentiments arising from recollections of the olden times. I rest, therefore, in the hope of growing stout, and when stout, of your being in the humour to invite me.

" In the course of *next* week I hope to prevail on you

and Cavendish Bradshaw, to partake of such fare, here, as a poor Lieutenant can offer:—

"Who rules o'er Beef-Eaters must himself eat Beef."

Ever yours, G. C."

"My Dear Edmund, 28th February, 1824.

"Clarges Street had not escaped my memory; although you had, by your own confession, forgot Melina Place; so that, in this particular, I am the most virtuous of the two; and now you shall

"Hear a sad story of woe."

"I was convalescent, and about to answer your letter, brought to me by *Filius*, when, lo! there came a second attack of the gout, much worse than the first, and the sharpest I ever experienced, which laid me flat again—that storm over, an intestine war arose; but, after all, I survive the tale, which will explain (and excuse, I hope) your not having heard from me sooner. At length I can sing, as they generally do, in the last scene but one of a pantomime,

"Hence grief and darkness, enter light and joy."

so come to your *maigre* dish here of beef, as soon and as often as you please. The sooner and the oftener, the happier you will make all here.

Ever yours, G. C."

"Brompton Square, 9th Jan. 1827.

"My Dear Edmund,

"After so long a notice of the commencement of our 'course of dinners,' I would not find you excuses for non-attendance, if the present state of my mind had not rendered me absolutely unfit for convivial encounters.

"I hate all affectation, and have no right to pretend to mourn more than my neighbours for a great national loss; but I was so truly and heartily attached to His Royal

Highness—I had so many reasons to love him, and to be grateful to him, that while the public is lamenting for the Prince, I feel the deepest sorrow on account of the man.

"But this must be the case with many (I think, indeed, with all), whom he admitted to his intimacy, and who well knew the affability of his manners, and the excellence of his heart. Both as to *me* and *mine*, the shock has been so severe, that we must take a little time before we shall be able to rally our spirits.

Yours, my dear Edmund,

G. Colman."

"Brompton Square, March 17, 1828.

"My Dear Edmund,

"My son, your namesake, called on you to-day, and means to repeat his visit to-morrow, to explain to you how incapable I am of invoking the muse, while I am daily calling in physicians. For nearly the whole of the last six weeks I have been bed-ridden; attacked, first, by gout simple, then gout rheumatic, and last, not least, by tic doloreux, a most tedious and tormenting complaint—

'They best can paint it who have felt it most.'

"I am now, they tell me, recovering, but still in much pain, and not sufficiently convalescent to be visible. But as I live in hope of getting a little better every day, refresh my memory by telling me on *what* you wished me to write. Perhaps, in a few days I may be able to scribble a few nonsensical sentences.

Most truly yours, G. C."

"My Dear Edmund, 17th April, 1828.

"I have knocked at the door, but unluckily there is nobody at home. In other words, I have beat my brains without success, for a subject on which I might scribble a few lines worthy of 'The Casket.' The truth is, that my

head is so full of autobiography, at this moment, and I am so pressed by my bookseller, who is outrageous at my delay, (which illness has occasioned,) that it is beyond my present power to abstract my thoughts from the work I have in hand. I regret this the less, as you tell me that the forthcoming poetical miscellany will boast almost all the talents of the age we live in; and among such a constellation my *twinkling* can be of no importance. At a more propitious season, when I have better health, and more leisure, you shall command me.

"I have been hunting in vain for a song which I scrawled about a year ago, and which I thought might answer the purpose.

"I cannot find it among my papers.

Yours, my dear Edmund, truly, G. C."

Colman received very considerable sums for his plays. For 'The Poor Gentleman,' and 'Who Wants a Guinea?' he was paid 550*l.* each, then the customary price for a five-act comedy; that is to say, 300*l.* on the first nine nights, 100*l.* on the twentieth night, and 150*l.* for the copyright*. For 'John Bull' (the most attractive comedy ever produced, having averaged 470*l.* per night for forty-seven nights), Mr. Harris paid 1000*l.*, and Colman afterwards received twice an additional 100*l.*, making 1200*l.* Mr. Harris was accustomed to pay an

* That is to say, 33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per *night* for the first nine nights —100*l.* on the twentieth night—and 100*l.* on the fortieth night. This was the plan settled by Cumberland with Sheridan, at Drury Lane, and Harris at Covent Garden, for remunerating authors, instead of their (generally losing) benefits. The copyright was usually understood to be a distinct bargain—the proprietor of the theatre was to have the refusal, at any *bonâ fide* price offered by a bookseller.

author one or two hundred pounds above the 550*l.*, when the drama was very successful, which was the case with most of Colman's plays.

We have not any record to prove what sum was received for the farce of 'X. Y. Z.;' but it appears that Mr. Harris paid Colman 600*l.* for that, and patching up one or two things.

Alas! times are sadly changed for authors; but in those days there were no ruinous salaries, nor was the star system in vogue (the stepping-stone to the downfall of the drama of England). "*Live, and let live*," was then the actor's motto. At that period, an author could write for a company, but now it must be for an individual; and the individual is paid such a monstrous sum for his nightly performance that the manager is incapacitated from giving a proper remuneration to the author, whose brains have created that which the over-paid actor has to deliver. The evil does not rest here: to administer to these single enormous salaries, the humbler members of the profession are compelled to accept terms upon which it is barely possible to exist. No person of respectable education would now think of venturing on the stage as a means of livelihood, whatever might be his talents, for he would be certain to have to exert himself, merely to throw the proceeds of his labour into the already well-filled pockets of three or four actors. Under these circumstances, is it astonishing that the drama has declined? If the writers of the present day had Lewis, Johnstone, Quick, John Palmer, Fawcett, Munden, Bannister, Emery, Mrs. Jordan, Miss Farren, Mrs. Mattocks, Miss Pope, *cum*

multis aliis, TO ACT for them, there would be no outcry against authorship*. We should again see comedy on the boards; but the star system has driven away authors from the theatres, and extirpated the race of good second rate useful actors, without whose assistance no play can be properly represented. There is no rule without an exception, yet the truth of the foregoing remarks will be pretty generally acknowledged; and when the stars *cease* to *shine*, the managers will then have to recur to the invention of the authors; but, alas! it will be too late, for the *profession* of the *actor* is nearly extinct. The regiment is broken up, and there is no *depôt* for recruits.

As a manager, Colman the younger was liberal, affable, and assiduous; he assumed no affected reserve or superiority, but was with all his performers familiar and friendly, though he never lost sight of the respect due to the audience, and of the proper interests of the theatre; and though, as Sir Fretful Plagiary says, "he writes himself," yet he was exempt from the narrow jealousy too often prevalent in the literary character, and they who aspired at dramatic distinction were sure to meet at his theatre with counsel, assistance, and protection. A proof of his affability as a manager, was observable in a kind of theatrical club, which he introduced among his performers, the object of which was to procure proper refreshments for them between the acts, and to promote a general spirit of good-fellow-

* N.B.—Not one of these admirable performers were ever paid 'star salaries.'

ship and harmony. The club alluded to was called the PROPERTY Club, being held at the back of the stage, among the scenery and other theatrical matters, which, in the language of the green-room, are termed *properties*. The club commenced at the end of the second act of the play, and concluded with the fall of the curtain. The chair was taken in succession, and several gentlemen of acknowledged merit in the literary world were members of it. It had, moreover, the recommendation of being attended by the female performers, who imparted a softer charm to the spirit of gaiety, and prevented it from deviating into excess. We have been the more particular in describing the nature of this club, because it was rendered an object of public notice by the animadversions of some of the newspaper wits of the day, and, therefore, might possibly be subject to misconception, if not prejudice.

There was one female in the theatre who had obtained a *certain* degree of notoriety, of the name of Cuyler, who was not admitted to this club. She was a clever woman, and a smart writer. There had appeared in a public journal, occasional, and not rare, anecdotes, signed, "A Mouse in the Green-Room" *(a nony mouse)*. She was suspected, and we believe, proved to be the mouse; and, principally, on this ground, was excluded. But the mouse, though allowed no longer to nibble at the bread-and-cheese and oysters, was still apparently present in a corner. All that was said or done was regularly *reported*, with such additions as jealousy, rage, and disappointment

might naturally prompt a vexed and ill-regulated mind. These sarcasms, in fact, broke up a most agreeable, convivial, though temperate meeting.

In private life, Colman was social and intelligent, expert in the playful contentions of wit and humour, and perfectly ready at what is termed repartee; and when surrounded by men of acknowledged pleasantry, in the general skirmish of raillery, was never at a loss for a spirited retort; though it must be acknowledged, that in this kind of amicable skirmish he has been fairly foiled with his own weapons by Theodore Hook, the most rapid wit and humorist of the age.

It gives us pleasure to introduce here the following recollections of Colman by his early friend Arnold* :

It is painful to record the frailties and irregularities of men of genius, and still more so, to enumerate their vices. Of the latter, we have fortunately none to dwell upon; though of the former, the subject of these papers affords abundant examples. Though truth and justice, however, may claim much from the biographer, he is a churl indeed who drags forth from obscurity every petty fault and trifling error, who, vulture-like, preys on the dead carcase, and leaves the skeleton he himself has abandoned, an object of disgust and scorn to the world around him.

The lives of celebrated authors and wits are seldom fruitful of much anecdote. Wit is of too evanescent a quality to be often successfully recorded,

* Kindly supplied by Mr. Arnold, at my request.—Editor.

and the attempt to transfix it, too frequently by its failure resembles the efforts of the philosopher in Gulliver, who endeavoured to cork up a sun-beam in a bottle, while the lives of mere professional authors have generally been marked by alternations of success and failure, of patronage and desertion, of hope and disappointment, of affluence and penury.

The life of Colman, however, though subject to some vicissitudes, can never be said to have brought him acquainted with want, though frequently compelling him to struggle through fluctuations of fortune, the unavoidable results of his own indiscretion, and the ruinous vanity of apeing the style and expenses of many associates far above him in rank and fortune. The keenest censure, however, must admit that this fault, unjustifiable as it was, arose out of an ambition to emulate the gentlemanly character; and when the disadvantage of his birth, and the reckless inadvertencies of his early life are taken into the scale, even censure must be silent, and nothing beyond the honest plea of liberality be heard in his requiem. So far the labour of a biographer would be found easy and rapid enough; but the ghost of George Colman, autocratically nicknamed "the younger," could he "revisit the glimpses of the moon," would scarcely thank the man who passed over his name with notice so slight and favourable: his object, through life, was distinction and notoriety, and he certainly was not nice, at any period of it, how that illegitimate fame was acquired.

For the reputation of a wit, Colman laboured with unwearied assiduity, and alike sacrificed a friend, or

provoked an enemy, by his efforts to obtain it. Notwithstanding this undignified ambition, with high spirits, a natural vein of humour, and a command of language which embraced a happy knack of playing upon words with that ludicrous association of things apparently opposed to each other, (which has been one of the definitions of wit, but which is in fact the very essence of a pun, and which our neighbours call a *calembourg*, or in better words a *jeu de mots*, in contradistinction to a *jeu d'esprit;*) with such qualifications for an agreeable companion, with the perfect manners and habits of a gentleman, with an excellent memory, and the all but self-acquired knowledge of classical and modern languages, it can be no wonder that his society was sought, his talents appreciated, and his fame extended.

Although Colman was more nearly allied to the character of a punster than that of a wit, he was more than either, that of a humorist; he said thousands of good things which would entirely lose their poignancy by repetition, since the inimitable chuckle of his voice, and the remarkable expression of his countenance, would be wanting. The intelligent roll of his large and almost glaring eyes, with the concurrent expression of his handsome face, were ever the unerring *avant couriers* of his forthcoming joke; and if any thing curtailed the mirth he had provoked, it was the almost interminable laughter with which he honoured his own effusion.

Colman was wont to say of that truly honest and excellent man the late John Fawcett, that he marred his best stories by preliminary laughter, and so he

did; but no man ever solicited applause to his own joke with more vehement ecstacy than the author of the remark just quoted.

It must be reluctantly admitted that no man was ever more tainted by jealousy as an author and a wit (the late celebrated and justly celebrated author of the 'West Indian,' perhaps, alone excepted), than Colman. I never heard him speak of the dramatic works of Sheridan without some debasing alloy; he undervalued him as a wit, and somewhat more than hinted that he thought himself more than a match for him in convivial society. By way of *salvo,* indeed, he lauded him to the skies as an orator; but even as such, I once heard him conclude his eulogium by adding, "but *that* is not a gift, but an acquirement: any man of sound sense and ordinary information, with good nerves, may make an orator by practice and preparation;" still, if honest truth is to be spoken, the wit of Sheridan was a razor, compared to which our friend Colman's was a bludgeon. I have been many times in company with both, when Sheridan was silent, and not easily drawn out; on which occasions Colman would gnarl, and fret, and talk *at* him as if to rouse and provoke him to the combat; but this was in Sheridan's later days, when suffering under bodily as well as mental ailment. He once said, when Colman made a successful hit, "I hate a pun, but Colman sometimes almost reconciles me to the infliction."

In fact, the finest traits of Colman's wit, were, *sui generis,* puns. At the table of George the Fourth,

when Prince Regent, the royal host said, "Why, Colman, you are older than I am?" "Oh, no, sir," replied Colman, "I could not *take the liberty* of coming into the world *before* your Royal Highness!"

Though this is legitimately a pun, it is most assuredly a witty one; and this, like every thing else that can now be told of so distinguished a man, is probably stale; but all such happy sayings should be recorded in a professed life of the individual.

Colman's intimacy with Frank North was for many years notorious, and when that high humorist became Lord North, Colman was invited, with other friends, to his patrimonial estate, of which he had just taken possession. The party arrived while the new peer was absent, and were ushered into a room full of family portraits, amongst which was a whole length of the late celebrated lord, in his full costume, and a long white wand in his hand. Colman had committed, *selon son usage*, a slight debauch over night, had been roused before his time in the morning for this journey, and had been a dull companion on the way: one of the party now applied to him, as to the meaning of this white wand, which no one appeared to understand. After nodding his head for half a minute and affecting to rouse, he said, "Eh! white wand? don't know, egad! but suppose it represents the North Pole!"

On my venturing to express to Mr. Colman my regret that he had published his preface to the play of the 'Iron Chest,' much as I admired the terse and spirited language in which it was written, he observed, that I knew not the provocation he had

received. I said, I could not conceive a *motive* for intentional injury, which he had ascribed to the great actor. "Then," said he, "I can explain the motive." He now proceeded to state, that he had invited Kemble to dine with him in Piccadilly, in order to read to him the play then in progress, and nearly completed: that Kemble had winced several times at descriptions which appeared *personal*, and that seeing a gloom come over him, he had more than once laid aside the manuscript, and passed the bottle, with a view to change the current of his thoughts; that they had sat together during the whole of that night and the following day, drinking; occasionally dozing and reviving, and ultimately through the following night! that at about four o'clock of the following morning, they both woke up at one moment, and stared one another in the face, with a vacant and unmeaning glare; that he, Colman, after some minutes of such non-intellectual intercourse, under the influence of real nervous feeling, broke out into an ejaculation, "What do you stare at? your eyes are on fire! By God, Kemble, I believe you are the devil incarnate!" Kemble's answer was "Phoo, George, you 're a fool," and never spoke another word. A coach was ordered an hour or two after, and he returned home. To this strange circumstance Colman attributed Kemble's determination to sink his play.

Mr. Colman has related, in his notorious preface to the publication of the Iron Chest, the circumstances attending its 'getting up' at Drury Lane. As a drama, it is certainly an inferior production,

considering the well-earned fame of the author; but I, as one who anxiously attended the first performance, having been honoured by hearing the author read it in private, cannot but bear free and honest testimony of the fact, that Kemble literally *walked through the part*, as the theatrical phrase has it; undoubtedly suffering under severe illness, but as undoubtedly guilty, as a manager, for producing the play, and risking the reputation of an author under such circumstances. Still, nothing could justify the virulence and littleness of the personal attack on Mr. Kemble. It is, also, to be remembered that he took advantage of Mr. Kemble's absence on the Continent to publish this attack; and I had it from Colman's own lips, that many months elapsed before the author and actor met by accident in the Haymarket, when Colman, naturally doubtful of what might be his reception, was simply addressed by the 'last of all the Romans' with a smiling shake of the head, and a passing observation of "Ah, George, you're a sad fellow!" Colman told me this anecdote with an air of some triumph; but I thought Kemble had the 'vantage ground,' and that this sole notice of his virulent preface was rather 'in *pity* than in anger.' I believe they were very good friends afterwards.

I once carried to Mr. Colman a printed translation (by Mr. Benjamin Thompson) of the play of Count Beniowski, which struck me as containing the *matériel* of a fine drama. His answer was, "Thank you, Robin; but we all know the story of Count Beniowski, and if a play is to be

written on it, I fancy I may presume that I could make as good an original play as Kotzebue!" Now, as the immortal author of 'The Critic,' 'The School for Scandal,' 'The Rivals,' and 'The Duenna,' had lately adapted to the English stage a translation by the same individual, from the same eccentric but highly-talented author, and produced it under the title of Pizarro, with unprecedented success, I candidly confess that my friend Colman appeared, on this occasion, in my humble judgment, to exhibit somewhat more of vanity, than discretion or modesty.

We are all vain on some point or other; and selfishness, according to Rochefoucault, is the natural characteristic of every living being; but it is rare, I think, to find a man's vanity or selfishness discordant with his own interests. I remember when Mr. Boaden produced a successful play at the Haymarket theatre, called 'The Italian Monk,' I was on the stage on the following morning, when Colman came to rehearsal. He was out of humour evidently, and said during the *cutting* rehearsal, aside to the stage manager, but in my hearing, "D—n the fellow, we shall now be pestered with his plays, year after year!" "Good God!" thought I, "if this is the fate of a successful author, what chance have I?"

The play I have alluded to had a ghost in it, and Mrs. Gibbs looked and acted like an angel. It was of this very play that Mr. Boaden was *said to have said*, he had given Billy, (meaning William Shakspeare) the go-by; and which ever after obtained

for him the *sobriquet* of Billy-the-go-by-Boaden. Notwithstanding this harmless joke at Mr. Boaden's expense, he has since edited biographical records of Mrs. Siddons and John Kemble, which will furnish future dramatic historians with a fund of valuable anecdotes and information.

Poor John Taylor, familiarly called Jack, does any one remember him without feelings of regard, allied almost to affection? He hardly deserved the bitter sarcasm which Colman gave with more wit than feeling on a volume of poems sent to him by the author, with whom he had been intimate during the greater part of his life. Taylor's work bore the well-known motto,

> "I left no calling for this idle trade;"

to which Colman added,

> "For none were blind enough to ask thine aid."

Be it remembered that Taylor was an oculist; an immediate descendant of the celebrated Chevalier of that name and profession; but having little or no practice, the satire was the more poignant. Taylor of course soon heard of this cutting *jeu d'esprit*, and though he affected to laugh at it, was thought to feel a little sore. Certain it is, that in company with Colman in a large party, very shortly after, the word 'calling' happened to be incidentally mentioned by the latter, when Taylor, with great quickness, interrupted him and said, "talking of *callings*, my dear boy, your father was a great dramatic 'English merchant,' now *your* dealings are and will always continue those of a small *Coal-*

man; I think I had you there! What? have I paid you for your 'None were blind enough'—eh?" Colman was evidently hurt; not, as may be supposed, by the severity or wit of so outrageous a pun, but from the better feeling of regret that his own bitter sarcasm had reached the ears of his victimised friend. They continued, however, intimate associates for many after years.

Woodfall, the editor and printer of the Public Advertiser, in which the letters of Junius originally appeared, was an excellent dramatic critic, and a great friend of the Colmans, both father and son. It was his invariable custom to send a private letter, on the morning following the production of any new piece at the Haymarket Theatre, to Mr. Colman, criticising, with friendly zeal, the composition and the performance, and recommending such alterations, as none but a studious observer and sincere and experienced lover of the drama could have suggested.

In consequence of my father's avocations in the theatre, I was, at that time, a great hanger-on behind the scenes, and permitted at rehearsals; when, on several occasions, Mr. Colman handed these letters to my father (and one, I remember, to me), and I had then the opportunity of marking the distinction between candid, unimpassioned, and genuine criticism, and the frothy nonsense, which it has of late years been my destiny to peruse in a large portion of the critiques issuing from the modern press. If these letters are extant, and I can hardly suppose it possible that they can have been destroyed, I am convinced they would afford a valuable vademecum

to the rapid generators of theatrical productions of the present day.

After three successive disappointments of special appointments made by Mr. Colman, I was, on a fourth, admitted at three o'clock in the afternoon (his man had told me very confidentially, that his master had only just come home in the morning), after waiting two hours, to his bed-chamber. He made a thousand excuses: "Shocking hours," "high fever all night," "no sleep till long after day-light," &c. Before we had even entered on the business that carried me to Piccadilly, the servant again entered, and said, "the Honourable Mr. Skeffington, Sir, is come, he says, by your appointment at this hour." "Did you say I was at home?" "I said you was not, Sir; but the gentleman said he was sure I was mistaken, since he came by your own appointment, and produced a letter, desiring me to go in and *enquire*."—"Fool!" cried Colman, "go and tell him I will write to him to-morrow, and that I have just gone to bed with a dreadful tooth-ache!"

No one ever satirized his own prevailing weakness with better humour than he did in his prelude, entitled 'New Hay, at the Old Market;' afterwards cut down to the effective interlude of 'Sylvester Daggerwood.'

When the subject of this memoir took the name of George Colman "the younger," a paragraph appeared in one of the journals of the day, observing that "the present author has adopted the name and *sobriquet* of 'George Colman the younger.' Now,

all the world knows, that 'Pliny the younger' was a *natural* son, and George Colman's is, therefore, a 'natural' imitation." Colman was one day dining with us in Duke Street, when the subject of certain little nursery songs which had been published by my father, and which were become very popular, was introduced. Colman begged to hear some of them, and when we ascended to the drawing-room, his request was repeated and complied with. Amongst them was one—

"Goosey, goosey gander,
Whither would you wander;
Up stairs, and down stairs,
And in my Lady's chamber.
There sits an old man,
Who could not say his pray'rs,
Take him by the left leg,
And throw him down stairs."

To this superlative nonsense, my father had composed some beautiful music for three voices. Colman was so struck by it, that he requested its repetition more than once; kept on humming it (he could not sing a note) for some minutes after, and then asking for writing materials, rapidly wrote these lines, which fit admirably to the music:—

"Playfully the moon-beams,
O'er the waves did wander;
Hero o'er the Hellespont,
Was watching for Leander!
Winds, let the waves pass—
Let the waves pass by—
Give them not a tear drop,
Nor swell them with a sigh!"

Colman was fond of relating an anecdote of the

Cibbers, father and son. The latter, Theophilus Cibber, complained to his father that the public journals took every possible opportunity of abusing him. "Indeed," said Colley, "and you complain of it? Is not constant abuse better than fulsome and unmerited praise? Is not any notice at all preferable to contemptuous silence? Take my advice, 'THE,' when the critics cease to abuse you, write paragraphs to abuse yourself, and pay the editors and reporters to insert them." On this principle, excepting the fact of paying for it, Cloman appeared to act during the whole of his latter life. He could not endure obscurity, and would rather be abused, however scurrilously, than unnoticed. He *would be talked of:* whether critically, abusively, or kindly and applaudingly, was no part of his consideration; and this strange principle, however inconsistent with his well-known love of praise, lasted to the termination of his existence.

When he received the appointment of Examiner of Plays for the Lord Chamberlain (an office which, I presume, is authorised by law, though I could never find it in any Act of Parliament), his first acts were unquestionably those of petty tyranny, and his next, those of grasping cupidity. One of the most licentious writers of his age, he appeared anxious to out-Herod Herod in the exercise of his new authority.

The examiner who preceded him was a gentleman of the name of Larpent, understood to be a rigid methodist, and certainly a rigid censor of the dramas submitted to his perusal. But Mr. Larpent's objections never extended, in my recollection,

beyond any dangerous sentences which appeared to meddle in politics in his dangerous times, or with sentiments which were calculated to subvert morality, glaringly to shock decency, or, above all, to bring religion of any description into contempt. But, generally speaking, the good taste, or the precautionary judgment of modern managers has left little occasion for such critical censorship. Colman, therefore, in order to be *distingué*, was driven to close quarters; where nothing blasphemous, immoral, or political, was to be discovered, he marked his critical acumen by disavowing a lover's right to call his mistress "an angel;" an angel, he said, was a character in Scripture, and not to be profaned on the stage by being applied to a woman. As a manager, I never, myself, suffered the name of the Deity to be spoken; at least, never irreverently, or on slight occasions, and always expunged it from the manuscript; but Colman went a step further; he would not license an address to the Deity, in any shape whatever. "Oh, Providence!" he said, was an address to the Providence of God, and ought not to be allowed! The name of Heaven or Hell, he uniformly expunged. On one occasion he observed, "The phrase, 'Oh, Heaven!' 'Ye Heavens,' occurs seven times in this piece—omit them!"

I had a ludicrous collection of these official scrupulosities, which I entrusted to a friend for a parliamentary purpose, who never returned them to me. A damn was a pill he could never swallow, which may in part account for the volubility with which that and other such unmeaning expletives flowed

almost perpetually from his mouth. On one occasion, he expunged the exclamation of "*O, lud!*" He said it meant, "*Oh! Lord,*" which was inadmissible. On another, where a dandy had to say, while addressing the chambermaid, "Demme, my dear," he observed, "*Demmee* means *damn me*—omit it;" but puerilities of this sort, annoying enough to author, manager, and actor, were too numerous to be quoted or remembered.

In a drama, written by Mr. John Banim, the well-known author of the 'Tales of the O'Hara Family,' which was sent to be licensed, Mr. Colman objected to some lines to be chaunted in a foreign cathedral by monks and nuns. Independent of the real beauty of the poetry, the passage was essential to the conduct of the piece; and though of course addressed to the Supreme Being, the sacred name was no-where mentioned. I personally remonstrated with the Examiner on this subject, and he persisted that he was right. "No address to the Deity should be permitted on the stage!"

"This is very new doctrine," said I, "and you will find it rather difficult to enforce it. What say you to the perpetual and profane occurrence of singing 'God save the King' upon the stage?"

"Oh! that is an anthem," he replied.

"And what is this but an anthem, to which you object?" I answered.

"True," said he; "but though custom has sanctioned the one, I cannot sanction it as a precedent."

"Custom," I replied, "cannot sanction profaneness, if profane it be; but a solemn address to the

Deity, or a reverential use of his name, is not so. Even the name of God, though I always object to, and prohibit its familiar use, has been sanctioned on the stage for ages. Is it more profane for a modern than an old writer to use it?"

"That is begging the question," said Colman.

"Not at all," I answered; "the Lord Chamberlain has the power given to him by Act of Parliament, to prohibit the performance on the stage, within the limits of Westminster or any place where the King and his court may reside, of any tragedy, comedy, play, or farce, or other entertainments of the stage, which he, in his wisdom and discretion, may deem immoral, &c. Now this power he has delegated to you as a sort of deputy, by what authority of Parliament or power I have in vain attempted to discover."

Colman interrupted this rather savagely—"I am a sworn officer of the Crown, and no deputy of the Lord Chamberlain. My duty is to read all plays submitted to the Lord Chamberlain for representation, and to recommend the licence to be granted or withheld, according to my conscience."

"Then," said I, "let us suppose that the 'Merchant of Venice' had been never acted, and had been found like 'Vortigern and Rowena' (barring the forgery), and it were offered you as an Examiner, would you recommend to the Lord Chamberlain to withhold the licence, unless that splendid speech of Portia's on mercy, were mutilated? would you expunge the line,

'It is an attribute of God himself?'"

"Certainly, I should expunge it," he replied.

"Indeed! then why not expunge it now?" rejoined I.

"Because I don't know that I have the power: it was licensed so long ago.

"Never," I observed. "You forget that the *licensing* act is not a century old."

"True! You are sharp upon us: egad we must speak by the card, ey? but what I mean is, *licensed by custom*."

"Custom," I replied, "has nothing to do with the question. The wisdom or the alarm of the legislature gave to the Lord Chamberlain, for the time being, a power perfectly anomalous in the English constitution: a power, I admit, necessary at the time to be vested somewhere or in somebody. I am far from quarrelling with the law itself, though I have seen it most grievously abused; but the power was given, not for the future only, but for the past. The Lord Chamberlain has the power to prohibit the acting of any drama (within his very limited jurisdiction) which he may deem expedient to prohibit, and he has done so on occasions within my memory, and been obeyed. Now, I maintain that a law should not be partially administered according to the discretion or whim of a judge; but that it should be acted upon, if at all, with justice as well as judgment—with consistency as well as impartiality. The Lord Chamberlain has just as much and the same power to suppress the performance of the 'Merchant of Venice,' without such castration as I have alluded to, as he has to prohibit the

performance of the appropriate and beautiful anthem, which is our present bone of contention. Why does he not do so? or rather, why do not you hold it to be your duty, as 'Examiner of all Plays,' to point out to him this oversight?"

"You are perfectly aware," said the Examiner, after taking a prodigious pinch of snuff, "that a modern audience would not allow of any further meddling with the text of Shakspeare?"

"And now," said I rather triumphantly, "and now, my dear Sir, I have you in a cleft stick! you assert that your *conscience* and *your oath of office*, compel you to a rigid act of duty with us poor devils of managers and authors, but when you come to meddle with a mightier power than your master, you overlook or forget your 'sworn duty,' and confine the exercise of your 'little brief authority' to us unresisting mortals whom chance has placed within your official power."

Colman, to the best of my knowledge and recoltion, never had the magnanimity to give up an opinion once adopted and maintained—

> "For though convinced against his will,
> He held the same opinion still—"

that is, however convinced, he never admitted conviction, but still argued on the defensive, when he had lost all hope of victory. Like many a gallant general, he considered a skilful retreat at least equal to the triumph of conquest, and in this Parthian warfare, he had generally the good fortune to succeed.

The conversation to which I have just alluded,

and which I noted partly at the time, extended, I recollect, to some length. I cannot now recall all its bearings; I remember, however, that some little warmth was excited on both sides, and that it ended in cordiality, and his request that I would dine with him on the following day, which I accordingly did. On this occasion, it is impossible to forget that long after dinner, and after "beating about the bush" for a considerable time, the subject uppermost in his thoughts could no longer be withheld. I will not attempt to repeat an after-dinner conversation, in which, up to a certain period, he was always especially excellent, fully aware not only that he had now the best of the argument, for which he had evidently well prepared himself, and to which I am but too conscious I should fail in attempting to do justice. On the point, however, which appeared most to have provoked his defensive meditations, that in which I had accused him of suffering passages in old writers to continue on the stage which he would expurgate from the works of modern authors, he was copious and minute. He repudiated all idea of timorous jurisdiction or partiality towards an existing evil, and at length appealed to *my candour* whether it would be fitting in any man, especially himself, to disturb passages which had been long established and sanctioned on the stage, and many amongst them that had been duly licensed, in order to display a nicety of opinion, which would reflect as a reproach not only on those who had preceded him, but on the taste and judgment of the public also.

I had quoted very many passages from his own writings, which he acknowledged he should expunge from any play then placed before him; to which he merely replied, that it was no fault of his, but a neglect of duty of the then existing Examiner. I own I pressed him closely on this point, and inquired whether he had never suffered words and sentiments, and passages to be spoken on his stage which Mr. Larpent had objected to; to which, as I well remember, he replied,

"Why, I believe I must plead guilty to that."

"And what, should a present manager follow your example, would be the consequence?"

"None, that I know of; unless anybody should lay an information for speaking any thing unlicensed on the stage, in which case, you know the penalty."

"Not *unlicensed*," I said, "but *prohibited*, which is stronger. You do not then trouble your head with what passes in the theatre, or whether your excisions are attended to or not?"

"Not in the least; my duty is to object to every thing immoral, or politically dangerous. When I have marked my objections, the play is licensed, subject to the omissions of the passages objected to; beyond this I have nothing to do, or an Examiner would become a spy as well as a censor on the theatre."

"By your own showing then," said I, "the whole system of licensing is a mere bubble; I say nothing of the petty tax on the pocket of the proprietor, for the payment of a licence, though that is something (how originating by the bye, unless as

an *expedition* fee, I have never yet been able to discover). But to say that a Government has enacted a law (a salutary law, I admit, if properly administered), which ends in the unexercised power of any officer of the crown, and the payment of certain unauthorised *fees*, is, I repeat, a judicial anomaly in the English constitution! Suppose any manager were to refuse to pay the fee of two guineas for the licence to enact a certain drama, on what plea could you enforce it?"

"Custom, from time immemorial."

"That is, from the time of the tenth of George the Second, if I mistake not. About eighty or ninety years, though this is by no means clear to me: and I believe you would find it difficult to prove even *that* beyond the time of the late Examiner. However, though immemorial custom (the *leye non scripta*) is the common law of the land, I am not aware that customs not sanctioned, but arising out of an Act of Parliament, which may be fairly called recent, or can even be traced from the statutes at any time, can be effectively brought forward in a Court of Justice to prove a right to a claim which that act in no respect authorises. I beg you will consider this argument, which is entirely *general*, as in no respect referring to your particular case—for of this be assured, that I shall never be the person to moot the question, especially with the palpable and proved hostility of the present Lord Chamberlain against me* Still some independent individual

* His Grace the Duke of Montrose, of whom more hereafter.

may hereafter bring forward the question, which I must say your annoying prohibitions provoke; that is, your right, or rather, the Lord Chamberlain's right, to prohibit *passages* at all."

Here, as I well remember, and I did not wonder at it, my friend Colman burst out into a very angry exclamation—"Would you have a whole play then condemned, and a licence refused, because some few passages or phrases, or sentiments, were obnoxious to censure—'egad, my master, this is laying the axe to the root with a vengeance. So! because a friendly and experienced woodman would lop off a few excrescent boughs, or, perhaps, a rotten branch or two, you would have him condemn the whole tree?

"Hear me," he continued, for I was about to reply, "hear me, for by G—, my dear fellow, you have had all the talk to yourself; what has the payment of the d——d fee to do with the question? Let Government give me an adequate salary, and I will relinquish the fee, which, egad, it is sometimes hard enough to get, with all my heart! But will you tell me in your sober conscience that it is not money d——d hardly earned to read through nine-tenths of the pieces you send for being licensed; 'was you an ass would you like it yourself,' my master? You have been so very obliging as to say you are not the person to question my right to my hard-earned fees; but you *do* question it, it seems, though not legally. The Lord Chamberlain has the undoubted right to license or prohibit the acting of any dramatic entertainment; I presume you will admit that."

"I admit no such general proposition," I replied.

" He has the power to prohibit, but not the power to license. The Act of Parliament requires that a copy of every play, &c. intended for representation, should be sent to him fourteen days, at the least, before its performance, and he has the decided power given to him to prohibit such performance; but I defy you to point out a passage in that act, or in any other act, which states that his licence is necessary to authorise the performance. His Lordship's licence, therefore, is passive, not active. If the Act of Parliament is complied with, and a copy of the drama be sent fourteen days at least before its representation on the stage for his perusal, *should no prohibition be received*, the manager is justified, according to my reading of the act, to produce the piece, without further license or hesitation. But, as you well know, on many occasions of local and temporary effusions on the stage, the loss of fourteen days would be fatal to the object of producing them. Managers on such occasions have, doubtless, in all times since the passing of that hastily-concocted and ill-considered act (notwithstanding Lord Chesterfield's splendid and memorable speech on the subject), been ready enough to pay an *expedition fee* to some person in the Lord Chamberlain's office or household (his valet perhaps), in order to obtain an immediate sanction for its representation *by a consent to abridge the tedious period exacted by the statute*."

" You consider then," interrupted Colman, " that the legislature treated the nobleman who generally fills the high office of Lord Chamberlain of His Majesty's

Household as a sort of pack-horse, and saddled him with a pair of panniers to receive all the mingled riches and rubbish which might be thrown into them by the managers, and that he was called upon to abandon all the avocations of his office, of his rank, and of his private concerns, to sit down and read, with close attention, the multifarious productions so heaped into his load. Now, really, this is monstrous! and I must say, my worthy brother manager, there is no arguing with a man who can seriously advance so preposterous a supposition."

"I admit," I replied, "the justice of every conclusion you have come to, provided always, that your premises were correct; but, unfortunately, your premises here being false, your conclusions are false also. I never imagined that the legislature considered the Lord Chamberlain a pack-horse; I never dreamed that they intended to saddle him with a new and arduous duty, for which, in nine cases out of ten, he might be notoriously unfit; but it is no violation of justice to suppose that a new duty might be imposed on an officer of the crown or court, who received a high honour from his appointment, together, probably, with some of those *douceurs* of salary which tend to sweeten the task of official labour, without supposing he was called on to execute the new duty in his own immediate person. As he was, however, by that act made the responsible person, it would be no great stretch of imposition to expect that he would employ a confidential and qualified deputy to read and report on the eighteen or twenty (or, at that time, smaller number) of plays

annually submitted to his judgment. This confidential deputy might well be supposed to be his private secretary, or some educated and judicious person in his office. But I still maintain, notwithstanding your asperity, my dear Sir, that the legislature, while they contemplated a seasonable check on the licentiousness of the stage, never dreamed of or authorised a regular tax upon it."

"Well! we will admit all that as a matter of opinion."

"Excuse me," I interrupted, for I had grown warm on the subject, "it is no matter of opinion at all; it is matter of fact: an opinion you might controvert, but a matter of fact you must disprove if you can. I again assert that you have no right, by any Act of Parliament, to demand a fee at all, because the proprietors have no occasion for any licence at all, beyond that under which their theatres are opened."

"I rather imagine," replied Colman, "that you are prodigiously mistaken in your very novel doctrine; I think I shall be able to prove that 'fees' have existed from the first establishment of the Lord Chamberlain's power."

"On the contrary," said I, "I believe the Examiner of plays has a salary, appointed by the Lord Chamberlain or the Government, as payment for his labour; and if so, I can see no reason why a tax also should be levied on the proprietor, in order to pay him twice over for the same work."

"Excuse *me*," said he, "but by G—d that remark is d——d illiberal!"

"It can only be illiberal," I replied, "as you apply the argument to yourself. I utterly disclaim all personality of course, and speak only as regards the office, not the officer; but if the subject gives you the slightest offence, though I cannot retract my opinion, I will cease to urge it."

And here, or hereabout, the conversation changed and dropped.

I have said that Colman's appointment to his new office was at first marked by petty tyranny, and afterwards by grasping cupidity: these are hard words, unless exemplified by facts, and I would have expunged them on reflection, had I not felt that such facts illustrate character, and form an essential part of the description of the man. His petty tyranny I have already, in some degree, exhibited in his frivolous though vexatious prohibitions. His cupidity was displayed in a restless and watchful anxiety to increase his fees, and generally on occasions which no former licenser had ever dreamt of. On two occasions, soon after his appointment, he wrote to me to know on what authority I announced a new piece. My answer was, that they had been prepared in the previous season, and had been duly licensed by his predecessor. He next called on actors, on their benefit nights, to know by what right they advertised a new song, or new songs, glees, or other musical interpolations; many of them well known to the public, but never licensed for the stage, and informing him that such songs and glees, &c., must not be performed in the theatre unless duly and separately licensed by him, for

each and every one of which, a fee of two guineas was demanded. Even an occasional address was by him voted a dramatic performance; and, on these occasions, the manager could afford no redress to the actor. At length, a shrewd and clever performer, still, I hope, well remembered by the name of "little Knight," defeated in a great degree this mercenary exaction, by stringing together a long list of songs, recitations, imitations, &c., which he wished to have performed at his benefit, with any nonsense of dialogue that came into his head, and so sent them to be licensed as *one piece*. They were licensed accordingly, the dialogue was all omitted, and the ingenious actor aided his benefit by saving eight or ten guineas, which would otherwise have found their way into the pocket of the Examiner.

About twelve or fourteen years ago, Mr. Hawes, to whom the musical public of this country is so much indebted for having brought forward, through the instrumentality (no pun intended) of my theatre, the far-famed 'Der Freischütz' of Weber, followed up by the 'Oracle' of Winter, and a host of splendid operas, which I may venture, without incurring the charge of egotism, to assert, have produced a new era in the musical taste of this country, undertook the conduct of oratorios, on his own risk, at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.

Colman saw a new oratorio announced, and instantly wrote to inquire on what authority Mr. Hawes advertised a new performance on the stage without a licence from the Lord Chamberlain. Mr. Hawes replied, that he had never heard that an

oratorio required any licence at all, and that he certainly would not be the person to establish a precedent. Colman persisted, and Hawes was resolute. The consequence was a summons to appear before the Lord Chamberlain (the Duke of Montrose), who at first was much disposed to side with Mr. Colman. Hawes, however, was as staunch to his object with the Duke, as he had been with the deputy: he urged that the words of the oratorio were entirely selected from the sacred volume, and he could not imagine that the Bible required a Lord Chamberlain's licence; that an oratorio could not by any perversion of ingenuity be deemed an entertainment OF the stage, though performed in a chamber erected UPON one; a distinction strongly marked by the great Lord Mansfield: in short, that this was the first attempt that had ever been made to enforce a demand of this nature, and he was resolutely determined to try the question of the right, rather than submit to what he considered an innovation and an imposition. The Duke at last gave up the point, and the oratorio was performed, as oratorios ever were, without any licence at all.

Had the result been different, and the manuscript had been submitted to the Examiner's pruning (I had nearly written *prurient*) pen, it would have been curious to observe what sort of skeleton he would have made of the performances. Every one knows, that in a sacred oratorio, the recorded words of Deity itself are set to music and sung; that addresses to the Supreme Being, such as "Holy, holy, Lord God Almighty;" "Oh, Thou that

bringest glad tidings to Zion," meaning our Saviour, are to be found in every page; *vide* the finest and most popular composition ever perhaps produced by man, 'The Messiah,' *passim*. It would have been rather puzzling to find such compositions prohibited in one public place by a licenser, while certain dignitaries of another calling, declared the church or the cathedral desecrated by such performances! Colman to be consistent, must have made a curious mess of an oratorio.

Very shortly after his appointment, Mr. Colman made a similar attack on Mathews's performances, and this also ended in an appeal to the Lord Chamberlain by Mathews. He stated that a copy of his entertainment could not be submitted, as in fact they were never collected in writing in a regular shape; that he had only *heads* and *hints* before him to refer to, should his memory falter*; but by far the principal part was given from memory, and variously from time to time, as circumstances or the humour of the moment influenced him: that if his Grace would permit him to submit a specimen before him and his family of the entertainment then preparing, he should be proud and happy to do so, as his Lordship would then see, from the nature of his imitations, and illustrations of character and manner, that it would be impossible to convey in writing an idea of a performance which depended wholly for its effect on the tone, look, and manner of the deliverer.

To this the noble Duke assented, 'nothing loath,'

* Not quite the fact, though many of Mathews's best bits *were* delivered from his memory.—Editor.

and on an appointed evening, Mathews actually exhibited his 'specimen' before his Grace and family, to their no small gratification and surprise. Mr. Mathews was dismissed with triumph; and had only afterwards to send to Mr. Colman '*something as a slight sketch*,' and *a title** by which he might license the performance.

As regarded myself, Colman was more successful in annoyance. I had argued with him, on my own part, not only that Mathews's performances were not dramatic representations, since to constitute a dramatic action, there must be at least two persons, and dialogue on the stage; but that the entertainments in question, which might just as well be exhibited in a private room as on a stage, could not be subject to his Lordship's jurisdiction at all, since they were produced under a magistrate's licence, at a season of the year when the theatre was unlicensed by the Lord Chamberlain. This unlucky truth armed his dexterity with a new weapon against me, and he so contrived to place it before the Duke, that when I received my next English Opera licence for four summer months, I found it saddled with a new clause, which "provided always, that no other performances or entertainments of any kind whatsoever were to be given or permitted during the remaining eight months of the year, unless duly and specially licensed by the Lord Chamberlain."

I well knew it would be in vain to remonstrate

* This slight sketch I drew up for many seasons, whether the entertainments (with *nine* of which he was connected) were his own, or from the pens of other authors.—EDITOR.

against this act of tyranny and injustice, or I should probably have lost my English Opera licence altogether, as well as that immediately promised for Mr. Mathews's Entertainments; which licences, be it understood, emanate from his Lordship's office, and are entirely separate and distinct from the two guinea affairs issued by the Examiner*.

In the year 1829, when the liberal and princely Duke of Devonshire had accepted the office of Lord Chamberlain, *vice* the Duke of Montrose, that noble patron of the fine arts first licensed the French plays, during the vacant winter season of the English Opera House.

Here Colman, as usual, put in his claim to the right of examining every piece performed. He anticipated nice pickings from a speculation in which nothing was enacted but short vaudevilles and other light pieces, of which three or four were given every night, and very seldom any of them repeated (one or two, with the performances of Perlêt and Jenny Vertpré, excepted). This would have given the Examiner, on an average, about six guineas per night, could he establish his claim, but I really considered this too monstrous an exaction. In the first place, I objected that plays in a foreign language could never have been contemplated by the Act of Parliament, as they were no where mentioned or alluded to. Colman said they were "entertainments of the stage." To this I replied,

* Mr. Arnold had to pay two guineas for the licence of the Astronomical Lecture delivered by Mr. Bartley at the Lyceum. —EDITOR.

that they certainly were so, but not of the English stage, to which alone the act referred. All argument was useless. I appealed to his Grace, who, after having patiently investigated the matter, and heard both sides of the question, peremptorily silenced the demand, and as I supposed, put the question at rest for ever.

Alas! not so! "A change came o'er the spirit of" the cabinet. His Grace of Devonshire retired with his party, and the Duke of Montrose once more grasped the wand of office, which had, from some unknown and even unsuspected cause, always fallen with peculiar severity on my shoulders.

> "Durum est," thought I,
> "sed levius fit patientiâ,
> Quicquid corrigere est nefas."—HORACE.

The Duke of Montrose was again in power, and Colman knew his time and his man. The old story of the examining, *id est*, the FEES, which I thought dead and buried, was resuscitated; at all events it rose from the grave, to which I had fondly hoped the Duke of Devonshire had consigned it, invoked by George Colman, as the Witch of Endor invoked the spirit of Samuel, and I was strongly tempted to paraphrase the ejaculation of my cognomen, and exclaim

> "Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring
> Me up."

but I was too indignant to be jocular, for that noble Lord was pleased, on an entirely *ex-parte* statement, to signify, through the said Examiner, that he had

revised and reversed the decision of his predecessor, and that in future we were condemned to pay the customary fees to the Examiner.

I would not for the world do an act of injustice to this illustrious nobleman, and therefore state that I have some reason to believe he suggested to Mr. Colman that his new decision was to be *prospective* only, and that the dramas which had been already acted under the authority of the late Lord Chamberlain, had better not be meddled or interfered with. In consequence, I received a notice from the Examiner, that on our furnishing him with a list of all those pieces which had already been brought forward, he would forego his claim on *them*, and lump the whole in *one* licence; they amounted to something like one hundred and fifty pieces, if I remember correctly, and the proposal evinced a tolerable state of indifference as to what ribaldry, blasphemy, disloyalty, they might severally contain, in case of their being repeated.

The fire which destroyed my theatre on the following season (February 16, 1830), and its fatal results, have driven from my memory all recollection of how this oppressive mandate terminated.*

My memory, indeed, was never good about trifles, but I can solemnly vouch for the truth of every fact I have asserted. A thousand documents are lost to me for ever; but my general impressions on all

* The vaudevilles and other French pieces were forwarded to the Examiner, and the licences were sent, signed by the Lord Chamberlain; the fee being reduced to one guinea each; it continues so to this day.—EDITOR.

important matters are as vividly alive in my recollection as ever. I am aware that I have confounded dates, and jumbled events out of their order; but the substance is solid, and I hope and believe the details are correct.

For mere opinions I claim nothing but candid judgment, since I trust that on such only they have been founded.

S. J. ARNOLD.

August 12, 1840.

The following account of the last moments of George Colman, is derived from his medical attendant:

"Michael's Place, Brompton,

"MY DEAR SIR, January 18, 1841.

"It was early in February 1830, that my attendance on Mr. Colman commenced. He had for many years been suffering from gout, and on this occasion I was apprehensive that there were evidences of some organic disease; he, also, was annoyed with a painful affection of the bladder, which, in the strongest constitutions, and most firm and philosophic minds, generally produces nervous irritation to a distressing degree. Each attack increased his inability to take exercise, and rendered it necessary for me to impose restrictions on his ordinary arrangements, and advise an avoidance as much as possible of social excitement.

"In November 1832, he was the subject of a very severe attack, accompanied with alarming symptoms of internal mischief, so as to require bleeding and other active measures. This illness continued three months; fortunately he rallied, and his health for some time subsequently was manifestly improving.

"This improvement, however, was only temporary: some months after, the old enemy visited him, and my former fears of the existence of organic disease of the liver and other parts returned; and to avoid the excitement attending his permanent residence in town, and to gain the advantage of country air, he removed to Greenford, the residence of my late friend Mr. Henry Harris. The result of this proceeding was more beneficial than my most sanguine expectations had induced me to anticipate. Nevertheless, my visits were necessary, and although the improvement was so evident, I could not but apprehend on many occasions, when I was with him, after a three months' residence at Greenford, that it was in a great measure depending on the mental quiet and perfect domestic happiness he enjoyed under Mr. Harris's roof.

"There were evident symptoms of decay of constitutional power, although his nervous energy was as stringent as ever. He remained at Greenford, with occasional visits to Brompton, till August 1836, when it was necessary, in consequence of increasing infirmities, that I should see him very much oftener than I possibly could at such a distance. Soon after his return to his old residence, it was too plain to my mind that we were to lose one of the brightest ornaments of this country; the painful malady I have referred to, was lamentably increasing both in virulence and degree, and notwithstanding we had the advantage of the unceasing attention, kindness, and skill of Dr. Chambers, in addition to whatever assistance I could render him, he ceased to exist on the 17th October, 1836.

"It has never fallen to my lot to witness 'in the hour of death,' so much serenity of mind, such perfect philosophy, or resignation more complete. Up to within one hour of his decease, he was perfectly sensible of his danger, and bore excruciating pain with the utmost fortitude. Towards the very latter part of his life, it was necessary that he should have medical assistance

more frequently than my engagements would allow, and my then assistant (who was equally zealous in matters of religion, as skilful in his profession) was with him during the night, and occasionally in the day. About four days prior to his decease, on my morning visit, Colman's first remark was 'Don't let Mr. —— come here any more; be with me yourself, as much as possible.' I naturally inquired the reason, as he had hitherto given so much satisfaction. With the greatest calmness, he told me, that he was, and had been for some time conscious of his danger; that he had prepared himself for whatever might occur; that he had made his peace with the Almighty; and, however he might suffer, I should observe he would not shrink from the decrees of Providence; but that he had no notion of being lectured on matters of religion by others than divines; that, during the greater part of the previous night, my assistant had been endeavouring to make him a convert to his peculiar views, accompanied by some terrible descriptions attending his non-acceptation of his religious tenets, and Mr. —— was only quieted by Colman stating that I had sent him as a medical man, and that which he required was relief to his body, not to his soul. When he wanted a physician, he would send for one; when he had occasion for a divine, he would request the attendance of a clergyman of his own creed.

"On a consequent examination of my assistant, I found that he, like many members of other religious communities, imagined that a person connected with dramatic pursuits must inevitably require spiritual consolation, and ventured, in this instance to o'erstep his professional duty. Mr. —— replied, that he, in the most delicate manner, pointed out to my poor patient his immediate danger, and afterwards represented the immense importance of attending to the welfare of his soul! His remarks, he stated, were borne with much patience, and at length terminated in the manner I have related.

" It is remarkable, that although the disease of Colman was of a most painful and irritating nature, yet his mind and temper were seldom disturbed: it appeared often to me, that in the same ratio he lost physical power and suffered bodily pain, there was increased cerebral energy, intellectual activity, and wit of the most genuine character. His late friend, General Phipps, has repeatedly said to me, after the most anxious inquiries as to Mr. Colman's probable recovery, when I have foreboded evil, ' I never enjoyed his society more: he is more witty and intellectual than ever !'

" This quiescence ought not entirely to be referred to the superiority of my patient's mind, or the control he exercised over his feelings, or from physical organization. The perfect domestic happiness he enjoyed, the constant, invariable attention of Mrs. Colman, the affectionate character of her disposition, her anxious solicitude, combined with the most perfect judgment, has not only been observed by me, but also, as constantly mentioned by him as one main, even the principal source of his comfort. Never could he bear her from his sight.

" Colman, as we all know, had been for a vast number of years accustomed to the most pleasing and exciting society, but he always said to me, ' There is nothing so delightful in life as domestic happiness and comfort.' This sentiment was also often repeated at Greenford, where he had not only the comfort resulting from Mrs. Colman's society, but the affectionate anxieties of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Harris. No man was more grateful for kindness shown to him, or more highly appreciated any interest evinced by his friends.

" His funeral was private: he was buried in the vaults under Kensington church, by the side of his father; his old friends General Lewis, Mr. Harris, myself, and one or two others only attending.

I am, &c.

H. S. Chinnock."

The following is a List of the Dramas written by George Colman the younger.

Two to One,	1784.
Turk and No Turk,	1785.
Inkle and Yarico,	1787.
Ways and Means,	1788.
Battle of Hexham,	1789.
Surrender of Calais,	1791.
Mountaineers,	1793.
New Hay at the Old Market,	1795.
Iron Chest,	1796.
Heir-at-law,	1797.
Blue Beard,	1798.
Blue Devils,	1798.
Feudal Times,	1799.
Review,	1800.
Poor Gentleman,	1800.
John Bull,	1802.
Love Laughs at Locksmiths, } under the name of	1802.
X. Y. Z., } Arthur Griffinhoofe	
Africans,	
Law of Java,	

THE END.

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